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HOW TO APPRECIATE MUSIC

BY

GUSTAV KOBBÉ

Author of "Wagner's Music-Dramas Analyzed," etc.

1906

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NEW YORK

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To the Memory of My Brother
PHILIP FERDINAND KOBBÉ

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INTRODUCTION

"ARE you musical?"

"No; I neither play nor sing."

Your answer shows a complete misunderstanding of the case. Because you neither play nor sing, it by no means follows that you are unmusical. If you love music and appreciate it, you may be more musical than many pianists or singers; and certainly you may become so.

This book is planned for the lover of music, for those who throng the concert and recital halls and the opera—those who have not followed music as a profession, and yet love it as an art; who may not play or sing, and yet are musical. Among these is an ever-growing number that "wants to know," that no longer is satisfied simply with allowing music to play upon the senses and the emotions, but wants to understand why it does so.

To satisfy this natural desire which, with many, amounts to a craving or even a passion, and to do so in wholly untechnical language and in a manner that shall be intelligible to the average reader, is the purpose of this book. In carrying it out I have not neglected the personal side of music, but have endeavored to keep clearly before the eyes of the reader, and in

their proper sequence, the great names in musical history.

I am somewhat of a radical in my musical opinions, one of those persons of advanced views who does not lift his eyes reverentially heavenward every time the words "symphony" and "sonata" are mentioned. In fact, I am most in sympathy with the liberating tendencies of modern music, which lays more stress upon the expression of life and truth than upon the exact form in which these are sought to be expressed. Nevertheless, I am quite aware that only through the gradual development and expansion of forms that now may be growing obsolete has music achieved its emancipation from the tyranny of form. Therefore, while I would rather listen to a Wagner music-drama than to a Mozart opera, or might go to more trouble to hear a Richard Strauss tone poem than a Beethoven symphony, I am not such an unconscionable heretic as to be unaware of the great, the very great part played by the Mozart opera and the Beethoven symphony in the evolution of music, or their importance in the orderly and systematic study of the art. Indeed, I was brought up on "Don Giovanni," the Fifth Symphony and the Sonatas before I brought myself up on Chopin. Liszt (for whom I have far greater admiration than most critics), and Wagner. Therefore, an ample portion of this book will be found devoted to the classical epoch and its great masters, especially its greatest master, Beethoven, and to the forms in which they worked. Nor do I think that these pages will be found written unsympathetically. But something is due the great body of music-lovers who, being told that they

must admire this, that and the other classical composer, *because he is classical,* find themselves at a loss and think themselves to blame because modern music makes a more vivid and deeper impression upon them. If they only knew it—they are in the right! But they have needed some one to tell them so.

"Advanced," this book is. But plenty will be found in it regarding the sonata and the symphony, and, through the latter, the development of the orchestra; and orchestral instruments, their tone quality, scope and purpose are described and explained.

More, perhaps, than in any work with the same purpose, the great part played by the pianoforte in the evolution of music is here recognized, and I have availed myself of the opportunity to tell much of the story of that evolution in connection with this, the most popular of musical instruments, and its great masters. Why the greater freedom of technique and expression made possible by the modern instrument has caused the classical sonata to be superseded by the more romantic works of Chopin and others whose compositions are typically pianistic, and how these works differ in form and substance from those of the classicists, are among the many points made clear in these chapters.

The same care has been bestowed upon that portion of the book relating to vocal music—to songs, opera, music-drama and oratorio. In fact, the aim has been to equip the lover of music—that is, of good music of all kinds—with the knowledge which will enable him to enjoy far more than before either an orchestral concert, a piano or song recital, an opera or a music-

drama—anything, in fact, in music from Bach to Richard Strauss; to place everything before him from the standpoint of a writer who is himself a lover of music and who, although thoroughly in sympathy with the more advanced schools of the art, also appreciates the great masters of the past and is behind none in acknowledging what they contributed to make music what it is.

"Are you musical?"

"No; I neither play nor sing."

But, if you can read and listen, there is no reason why you should not be more musical—a more genuine lover of music—than many of those whose musicianship lies merely in their fingers or vocal cords. Try!

GUSTAV KOBBÉ.

HOW TO APPRECIATE A PIANOFORTE RECITAL

I

THE PIANOFORTE

THERE must be practically on the part of every one who attends a pianoforte recital some degree of curiosity regarding the instrument itself. Therefore, it seems to me pertinent to institute at the very outset an inquiry into what the pianoforte is and how it became what it is—the most practical, most expressive and most universal of musical instruments, the instrument of the concert hall and of the intimate home circle. Knowledge of such things surely will enhance the enjoyment of a pianoforte recital—should be, in fact, a prerequisite to it.

The pianoforte is the most used and, for that very reason, perhaps, the most abused of musical instruments. Even its real name generally is denied it. Most people call it a piano, although *piano* is a musical term denoting a degree of sound, soft, gentle, low—the opposite of *forte,* which means strong and loud. The combination of the two terms in one word, pianoforte, signifies that the instrument is capable of being played both softly and loudly—both *piano* and *forte.* It was this capacity that distinguished it from its immediate precursors, the old-time harpsichords and clavichords. One of the first requirements in learning how to understand music is to learn to call things musical by their

right names. To speak of a pianoforte as a piano is one of our unjustifiable modern shortcuts of speech, a characteristic specimen of linguistic laziness and evidence of utter ignorance concerning the origin and character of the instrument.

If I were asked to express in a single phrase the importance of this instrument in the musical life of to-day I would say that the pianoforte is the orchestra of the home. Indeed, the title of the familiar song "What Is Home Without a Mother?" might, without any undue stretch of imagination, be changed to "What Is Home Without a Pianoforte?"—although, if you are working hard at your music and practicing scales and finger exercises several hours a day, it might be wiser not to ask your neighbor's opinion on this point.

The King of Instruments.

"In households where there is no pianoforte we seem to breathe a foreign atmosphere," says Oscar Bie, in his history of the instrument and its players; and he adds with perfect truth that it has become an essential part of our life, giving its form to our whole musical culture and stamping its characteristics upon our whole conception of music. Surely out of every ten musical persons, layman or professional, at least nine almost invariably have received their first introduction to music through the pianoforte and have derived the greater part of their musical knowledge from it. Even composers like Wagner and Meyerbeer, whose work is wholly associated with opera, had their first lessons in music on the pianoforte, and Meyerbeer achieved

brilliant triumphs as a concert pianist before he turned his attention to the operatic stage.

Of all musical instruments the pianoforte is the most intimate and at the same time the most public—"the favorite of the lonely mourner and of the solitary soul whose joy seeks expression" and the tie that unites the circle of family and friends. Yet it also thrills the great audience of the concert hall and rouses it to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. It is the king of instruments, and the reason for its supremacy is not far to seek. Weitzmann, the author of the first comprehensive account of the pianoforte and its literature, speaks of its ability "to lend living expression to all phases of emotion for which language lacks words"; its full, resonant tone; its volume vying with that of the orchestra; its command of every shade of sound from the gentlest *pianissimo* to the most powerful *forte;* and its mechanism, which permits of the most rapid runs and passages, and at the same time of sustained singing notes and phrases.

Music Under One's Fingers.

But this is not all. There is an overture by Weber entitled "The Ruler of the Spirits." Well, he who commands the row of white and black keys is ruler of the spirits of music. He has music, all that music can give, within the grasp of his two hands, under his ten fingers. The pianoforte can render anything in music. Besides music of its own, it can reproduce the orchestra or the voice with even greater fidelity than the finest engraving renders a painting; for only to the eyes

of one familiar with the painting does the engraving suggest the color scheme of the original, whereas, through certain nuances of technique that are more easily felt than described, the pianoforte virtuoso who is playing an arrangement of an orchestra composition can make his audience hear certain instruments of the orchestra—even such characteristic effects as the far-carrying pizzicato, or the rumbling of the double basses or their low growl; the hollow, reverberating percussions of the tympani; sustained notes on the horns; the majestic accents of trombones; the sharp shrill of piccolos; while some of the most effective pianoforte pieces are arrangements of songs.

Moreover, there are pianoforte compositions like the Hungarian rhapsodies of Liszt which, while conceived and carried out in the true spirit of the instrument ("pianistic," as they say), yet suggest the tone colors of the orchestra without permitting these to obtrude themselves too much. This is one of the many services of Liszt, the giant of virtuosos and a giant among composers, to his art. It has been said that Liszt played the whole orchestra on the pianoforte. He did even more. He developed the technique of the instrument to such a point that the suggestion of many of the clang tints of the orchestra has become part of its heritage. This dual capacity of the pianoforte, the fact that it has a tone quality wholly peculiar to itself, so that when, for example, we are playing Chopin we never think of the orchestra, while at the same time it can take up into itself and reproduce, or at least suggest, the tone colors of other instruments, is one of its most remarkable characteristics.

Quite as remarkable and as interesting and important is the circumstance that these tone tints are wholly dependent upon the player. There is nothing peculiar to the make of the strings, the sounding-board, the hammers, that tends to produce these effects. They are due wholly to the player's subtle manipulation of the keys, so that we get the added thrill of the virtuoso's personal magnetism. The pianoforte owes much of its popularity, much of its supremacy, to the fact that a player's interpretation of a composition cannot be marred by any one but himself. It rests in his hands alone, whereas the conductor of an orchestra is dependent upon a hundred players, some of whom may have no more soul than so many wooden Indians. Even supposing a conductor to be gifted with a highly poetic and musically sensitive nature, it is impossible that so many men of varying degrees of temperament as go to make up an orchestra, and none of them probably a virtuoso of the highest rank, will be as sympathetically responsive to his baton as a pianoforte is to the fingers of a musical poet like Paderewski; for the fingers of a great virtuoso are the ambassadors of his soul.

Melody and Accompaniment on One Instrument.

This personal, one-man control of the instrument has been of inestimable value to the pianoforte in establishing itself in its present unassailable position. Moreover, in controlling it the pianist commands all the resources of music. With his two thumbs alone he can accomplish what no player upon any other instrument

in common use is capable of doing with all ten fingers. He can sound together the lowest and the highest notes in music, for all the notes of music as we know it simply await the pressure of the fingers upon the keys of the pianoforte. It is the one instrument capable of power as well as of sweetness and grace which places the whole range of harmony and counterpoint at the disposal of one player. A vocalist can sing an air, but can you imagine a vocalist singing through an entire programme without accompaniment? After half a dozen unaccompanied songs the singing even of the greatest prima donna would become monotonous for lack of harmony. The violin and violoncello, next to the pianoforte the most frequently heard instruments in the concert hall, labor under the same disadvantage as the singer. They are dependent upon the accompaniment of others.

The pianist, on the other hand, has the inestimable advantage of being able to play melody and accompaniment on one instrument at the same time—all in one. While singing with some of his fingers the tender melodic phrase of a Chopin nocturne, he completes with the others the exquisite weave of harmony, and reveals the musical fabric to us in all its beauty. Moreover, it is the pianist himself who does this, not some one else at his signal, which the intermediary possibly may not wholly understand. When Paderewski is at the pianoforte we hear Paderewski—not some one else of a less sensitive temperament whom he is directing with a baton. A poet is at the instrument and we hear the poet. A poet may be at the conductor's desk—but in the orchestra that is required for the interpretation

of his musical conceptions poets usually are conspicuous by their absence. Even great singers suffer because their accompaniments are apt not to be as sensitive of temperament as they are; and it is a fact that the grace and beauty of Schubert's "Hark, Hark, the Lark" never have been so fully revealed to me by a singer as by Paderewski's playing of Liszt's arrangement of the song, because the pianist is able to shade the accompaniment to the most delicate nuances of the melody. How delightful, too, it is to go through the pianoforte score of a Wagner music-drama and, as you play the wonderful music—all placed within the grasp of your ten fingers—watch the scenic pictures and the action pass in imagination before your eyes in your own music room without the defects inseparable from every public performance, because the success of a performance depends upon the co-operation of so many who do not co-operate. Yes, the pianoforte is the king of instruments because it is the most independent of instruments and because it makes him who plays upon it independent.

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Music's Debt to the Pianoforte.

It would be difficult to overestimate the debt that music owes to the pianoforte. Including for the present under this one name the various keyboard instruments from which it was developed, the sonata form had its first tentative beginnings upon it and was wrought out to perfection through it by a process of gradual evolution extending from Domenico Scarlatti through Bach's son, Philipp Emanuel Bach, to Beethoven. As a symphony simply is a sonata for orchestra,

it follows that through the sonata and thus through the pianoforte the form in which the classical composers cast their greatest works was established. Richard Strauss, in his revision of Berlioz's book on orchestration, even goes so far as to assert that Beethoven, and after him Schumann and Brahms, treated the orchestra pianistically; but the discussion of this point is better deferred until we take up the orchestra and orchestral music.

Here, however, it may be observed that in addition to its constant use as an instrument for the concert hall and the home, and for the delight of great audiences and the joy of the amateur player and his familiar circle, many of the great composers, even when writing orchestral works, have used the pianoforte for their first sketches, testing their harmonies on it, and often, no doubt, while groping over the keys in search of the psychical note, hit upon accidental improvements and new harmonies. Even Wagner, who understood the orchestra as none other ever has, employed the pianoforte in sketching out his ideas. "I went to my Erard and wrote out the passage as rapidly as if I had it by heart," he writes from Venice to Mathilde Wesendonk, in relating to her the genesis of the great love duet in "Tristan und Isolde," and I could quote other passages from my Wagner and his "Isolde," which is based on the romantic passages in the lives of the composer and the woman who inspired his great music-drama, to show the frequency with which he made similar use of the universal musical instrument.

The pianoforte has in many other ways been a boon to some of the most famous composers. Many of them

were pianists, and by public performances of their own works materially accelerated the appreciation of their music. Mozart was a youthful prodigy, and later a virtuoso of the highest rank. Beethoven, before he was overtaken by deafness, introduced his own pianoforte compositions to the public and was the musical lion of the Viennese drawing-rooms. Mendelssohn was a pianist of the same smooth, affable, gentlemanly type as his music. Chopin was not a miscellaneous concert player—his nature was too shrinking; but at the Salon Pleyei in Paris he gave recitals to the musical élite, who in turn conveyed his ideas to the greater public. Schumann began his musical career as a virtuoso, but strained the fourth finger of his right hand in using a mechanical apparatus which he had devised for facilitating the practice of finger exercises. His wife, Clara Wieck, however, who was the most famous woman pianist of her time, substituted her fingers for his. Liszt literally hewed out the way for his works on the keyboard. Brahms was a pianist of solid, scholarly attainments. In fact, dig where you will in musical soil, you strike the roots of the pianoforte.

Its Lowly Origin.

It must not be supposed, however, that the instrument as we know it attained to its present supremacy except through a long process of evolution. One of the immediate precursors of the modern pianoforte was the harpsichord, a name suggesting that the instrument was a harp with a keyboard attachment, and such, in a general way, the pianoforte is. But the harp is

a very fully developed affair compared with the mean little apparatus in which lay and was discovered many centuries ago the first germ of the king among instruments. This was the monochord, and it has required about nine centuries for the evolution of an instrument consisting of a single string set in vibration by means of a keyboard attachment into the modern pianoforte. But do not be alarmed. I am not about to give a nine hundred years' history of the pianoforte. Such detailed consideration would belong to a technical work on the manufacture of the instrument and would be out of place here. Something of its history should, however, be known to every one who wants to understand music, but I shall endeavor to be as brief and at the same time as clear as possible.

The monochord originally was used much as we use a tuning fork, to determine true musical pitch. If you take a short piece of string, tie one end of it fast, draw it taut and pluck it, its vibrations will sound a note. If you grasp the string and draw it taut from nearer to the point where it is tied, you shorten what is called the "node," increase the number of vibrations and produce a higher note. The monochord in its simplest form consisted of a string drawn taut over an oblong box and tuned to a given pitch by means of a peg. Under the string and in contact with it was a bridge or fret that could be moved by hand along a graduated scale marked on the bottom of the box. By moving the bridge the node of the string could be shortened and the notes marked at corresponding points on the graduated scale produced. After a while, and in order to facilitate the study of the harmonious relationship be-

tween different notes, three strings were added, each with its bridge and graduated scale.

It was more or less of a nuisance, however, to continually shift four bridges to as many different points under the four strings. As an improvement upon this awkward arrangement some clever person conceived about the beginning of the tenth century, the idea of borrowing the keyboard from the organ and attaching it to the monochord. To the rear end of each key was attached an upright piece called a tangent. When the finger pressed upon a key the tangent struck one of the strings, set it in vibration, and at the same time, by contact, created a node which lasted as long as the key was kept down and the tangent remained pressed against the string. To increase the utility of the instrument by adding more strings and more keys was the next obvious step, and gradually the monochord ceased to be a mere technical apparatus for the determining of pitch and became an instrument on which professionals and amateurs could play with pleasure to themselves and others.

A Poet's Advice to His Musical Daughter.

There has been preserved to us from about the year 1529 a reply made by the poet Pietro Bembo to his daughter Elena, who had written to him from the convent where she was being educated asking if she could have lessons upon the monochord, which seems to have been as popular in its day as its fully developed successor, the modern pianoforte, is now.

"Touching thy request for permission to play upon the monochord," begins Bembo's quaint answer, "I reply that because of thy tender years thou canst not know that playing is an art for vain and frivolous women, whereas I would that thou shouldst be the most chaste and modest maiden alive. Besides, if thou wert to play badly it would cause thee little pleasure and no little shame. Yet in order to play well thou must needs give up from ten to twelve years to the exercise, without so much as thinking of aught else. How far this would benefit thee thou canst see for thyself without my telling thee. But thy schoolmates, if they desire thee to learn to play for their pleasure, tell them thou dost not care to have them laugh at thy mortification. Therefore, content thyself with the pursuit of the sciences and the practice of needlework." These words of the poet Bembo to his daughter Elena—are they so wholly lacking in application to our own day? And I wonder—did or did not Elena learn to play the monochord? If not, it was because she lived a few centuries too soon. She would have had her own way to-day!

The Clavichord.

Monochord means "one string," and the application of the term to the instrument after other strings had been added was a misnomer. The monochord on which Elena, to the evident distress of her distinguished parent, desired to play, really was a clavichord, which was derived directly from the primitive monochord.

If you will raise the lid of your pianoforte you will find that the strings become shorter from the bass up,

the lowest note being sounded by the longest, the highest note by the shortest string; for the longer the string the slower the vibrations and the deeper the sounds produced, and *vice versa*. This principle is so obvious that it seems as if it must have been applied to the clavichord almost immediately and a separate string provided for each key. But for many years the strings of the clavichord continued all of equal length, and three or four neighboring keys struck the same string, so that the contact of the upright tangent with the string not only set the latter in vibration but also served to form the node which produced the desired note. Not until after the clavichord had been in use several centuries, were its strings made of varying length and a separate string assigned to each key. These new clavichords were called *bundfrei* (fret-free or tangent-free) because the node of each string was determined by that string's length and not by the contact of the tangent.

The clavichord retained the box shape of its prototype, the monochord. Originally it was portable and was set upon a table; later, however, was made, so to speak, to stand upon its own legs. In appearance it resembled our square pianofortes. It gave forth a sweet, gentle and decidedly pretty musical sound. It had a further admirable quality in its capacity for sustaining a tone, since by keeping the tangent pressed against the string the player was able to sustain the tone so long as the string continued to vibrate. Moreover, by holding down the key and at the same time making a gentle rocking motion with the finger he was able to produce a tremolo effect which German musi-

cians called *Bebung* (trembling), and the French *balancement.*

A defect of the clavichord was, however, its lack of power. This defect led to experiments which resulted in the construction of a keyboard instrument the strings of which, in response to the action of the keys, were set in vibration by jacks tipped with crow-quills or hard leather. The sound was much stronger than that of the clavichord. But the jacks twanged the strings with uniform power, "permitting a sharp outline, but no shading of the tones."

The Harpsichord.

If you chance to be listening to a Hungarian band at a restaurant you may notice that one of the players has lying on a table before him an instrument with many strings strung very much like those of the pianoforte. It is played with two little mallets in the player's hands, and produces the weird arpeggios and improvised runs characteristic of Hungarian gypsy music. It is a very old instrument called the cembalo. About the fifteenth century, it seems, some one devised a keyboard attachment with quills for this instrument, tipped the jacks with crow-quills, and called the result a clavicembalo (a cembalo with keys). This was the origin of the harpsichord, the name by which the clavicembalo soon became more generally known. Harpsichords were shaped somewhat like our grand pianofortes, but were much smaller. A spinet was a small harpsichord, and the virginal a still smaller one. Sometimes, indeed, virginals were made no larger than workboxes,

the instrument being taken out of the box and placed on a table before the player.

For the purposes of this book this very general survey of the precursors of the pianoforte seems sufficient. The clavichord and the instruments of the harpsichord (harpsichord, spinet, and virginal) class flourished alongside of each other, but the best musicians gave the preference to the clavichord because of its sweet tone and the delicately tremulous effect that could be produced upon it by the *balancement*. Experiments in pianoforte making were in progress already in Bach's day, but he clung to the clavichord, as did his son, Philipp Emanuel Bach. Mozart was the first of the great masters to realize the value of the pianoforte and to aid materially in making it popular by using it for his public performances. And yet even then the clavichord, "that lonely, melancholy, unspeakably sweet instrument," was not abandoned without lingering regret by the older musicians, and it still was to be found in occasional use as late as the beginning of the last century. How thoroughly modern the pianoforte is will be appreciated when it is said that a celebrated firm of English makers founded in 1730 did not begin to manufacture pianofortes until 1780 and continued the production of clavichords until 1793.

Piano and Forte.

Neither on the clavichord nor on the harpsichord could the player vary the strength of the tone which he produced, by the degree of force with which he struck the keys. Swells and pedals worked by the knees and

the feet were devised to overcome this difficulty, but "touch" as we understand it to-day was impossible with the instruments in which the degree of sound to be produced was not under the control of the player's fingers. The clavichord was *piano*, the harpsichord was *forte*. Not until the invention of the hammer action, the substitution of hammers for tangents and quill-jacks, was an instrument possible in which whether the tone should be *piano* or *forte* depended upon the degree of strength with which the player struck the keys. This instrument was the first pianoforte. It was invented and so named in 1711 by Bartolomeo Cristofori, of Florence, and, although nearly two centuries have elapsed since then, the action used by many pianoforte manufacturers of to-day is in its essentials the same as that devised by this clever Italian. The invention frequently is ascribed to Gottfried Silbermann, a German (1683-1753). But the real situation is that Cristofori was the inventor, while Silbermann was the first successful manufacturer of the new instruments, from a business point of view. Time and improvements were required before they made their way, and how slow many professional musicians were in giving up the beloved clavichord for the pianoforte already has been pointed out. But the latter was bound to triumph in the end.

I shall not attempt to give a technical description of the mechanism of the pianoforte. But I should like to answer a few questions which may have suggested themselves to players who may not have cared to take their instruments apart and examine them, or have not been present when their tuners have taken off the

lid and exposed the strings and mechanism to view. The strings of the pianoforte are of steel wire, and their tension varies from twelve tons to nearly twenty. Those of the deepest bass are covered with copper wire. Eight or ten tones of the bass are produced by the vibration of these copper-wound strings. Above these, for about an octave and a half, the strings are in pairs, so that, the hammer striking them, there are two unison strings to a tone, simultaneously, and producing approximately twice as powerful a tone as if only one string had been set in vibration. The five remaining octaves have three strings to a tone.

All Depends on the Player.

When the fingers strike the keys the hammers strike the strings, the force of the stroke depending upon the force exerted by the player, this being the distinguishing merit of the pianoforte as compared with its precursors. Under the strings are a row of dampers, and as soon as a finger releases a key the corresponding damper springs into place against the vibrating strings, stops the vibrations, and the tone ceases. Thus the tone can be dampened immediately by raising the finger or prolonged by keeping the finger pressed down on the key. This is the device which enables the pianist to play *staccato* or *legato*. The damper pedal, or loud pedal, checks the action of all the dampers and prolongs the tones even after the fingers have released the keys. The soft pedal brings the hammers nearer the strings, shortens the stroke and produces a softer tone. The simultaneous use of both pedals is a modern

virtuoso effect and a very charming one, for the damper pedal prolongs the gentle tones produced by the use of the soft pedal. I believe Paderewski was the first of the great pianists who have visited this country, to employ this effect systematically, and that he was among the first composers to formally indicate the simultaneous employment of both pedals in passages in his compositions. There is a third pedal called the sustaining pedal, but I do not think it has proved as valuable an invention as was anticipated.

Within recent years there have been introduced mechanical pianofortes, which I may designate as pianolas, after the most popular instrument of their class. In my opinion, these instruments are destined to play an important part in the diffusion of musical knowledge, and it is senseless to underestimate this. There are thousands of people who have neither the time nor the dexterity to master the technique of the pianoforte, who nevertheless are people of genuine musical feeling, and who are enabled through the pianola to cultivate their taste for music. The device renders the music accurately; whether expressively or not depends, as with the pianoforte itself, upon the taste of the person who manipulates it.

Decorations That Do Not Beautify.

The pianoforte often is spoken of as an instrument of ugly appearance. This it emphatically is not. If the straight side of the grand is placed against the wall the side toward the room presents a graceful, sweeping curve, while the upright effectively breaks the straight

line of the wall against which it stands. If the pianoforte is ugly, it is due to the so-called "ornaments" that are placed upon it—the knicknacks, framed pictures and other senseless things. To my mind, there is but one thing which it is permissible to place upon a pianoforte, a slender vase with a single flower, preferably a rose—the living symbol of the soul that waits to be awakened within the instrument.

Sheet music or bound books of music on top of a pianoforte are an abomination. If scattered about they look disorderly; if neatly arranged in portfolios, even worse, for they create the precise, orderly appearance of paths and mounds in a cemetery. Often, indeed, the pianoforte is a graveyard of musical hopes. Because of that, however, it need not be made to look like one.

Equally objectionable is the elaborately decorated or "period" pianoforte designed for rooms decorated in the style of some historical art period. A pianoforte has no business in a "period" room. If the person is rich enough to afford "period" rooms, he also can afford a music room, and the simpler this is, within the bounds of good taste, and the less there is in it besides the instrument itself, the better. The more proficient the pianist the less he cares for decoration and the more satisfied he is with the pianoforte turned out in the ordinary course of business by the high-class manufacturer. No—decorated pianofortes are for those who are too rich to be musical.

II

BACH'S SERVICE TO MUSIC

SO important has been the rôle played by the pianoforte in the evolution of music that it is possible in these chapters on a pianoforte recital to give a general survey of the art, and thus prepare the reader to enjoy not only what he will hear at such a recital, but enable him to approach it with a more comprehensive knowledge than that would imply. This is one reason why I elected to lead with the chapters on the pianoforte instead of with those on the orchestra, as usually is done, because the orchestra is something "big." In point of fact, however, the pianoforte, so far as its influence is concerned, is quite as "big," if not, indeed, bigger than the orchestra; for often, in the evolution of music (as I pointed out in the previous chapter), this instrument, which is so sufficient in itself, has led the orchestra. In reviewing a pianoforte recital it therefore is quite possible to review many phases of musical history.

Take as an example a composition by Bach, one of the preludes and fugues from "The Well-Tempered Clavichord," with which a pianoforte recital is quite apt to open. The selection illustrates a whole epoch in music which Bach rounded off and brought alike to its climax and its close. You will be apt to find this

fugue rather complicated and, I fear, somewhat unintelligible, and this makes it necessary for me to point out at once that in some respects music has had a curious development. A Wagner music-drama, a Richard Strauss tone poem, seem elaborate and complicated affairs compared with a Beethoven sonata or symphony. Yet even the most advanced work of a Wagner or Strauss is neither as complicated nor as elaborate as a fugue by that past master of his art, Johann Sebastian Bach, who, although he was born in 1685 and did not live beyond the middle of the following century, was so far ahead of his age that not even to this day has he fully come into his own. The result is that the early classicists, Haydn and Mozart, who belong in point of time to a later epoch, may more readily be reckoned as "old-fashioned" than Father Bach. When at a recital you listen to a fugue by Bach and find it hard and labored—many people regard it simply as a difficult species of finger exercises—you think that is because it is so very ancient, something in the same class with Greek or Sanscrit. In point of fact it is because in some respects it is so very modern.

Were it not for the importance of preserving an orderly historical sequence in a book of this kind, and that Bach usually is found at the beginning of a recital program, it would be almost more practical, and certainly far easier, for the author to leave Bach until later. When you write of Mozart, or of Beethoven and the moderns, you can depend upon more or less familiarity with their works on the part of your readers, whereas comparatively few laymen know much about Bach. They associate the name with all that is formal

and labored. Yet among my acquaintances is a young woman who was brought up in a very musical family, and who, having as a child heard her mother play the preludes and fugues of the "Well-Tempered Clavichord," finds Bach as simple as the alphabet. But hers is a most exceptional case. The appreciation of Bach, as a rule, comes only with advanced age. My music teacher used to say to me: "You rave over Schubert and Wagner now, but when you get to be as old as I am you will go back to Father Bach." While I cannot say that his prophecy has come true, while I still am ultra-modern in my musical predilections, my musical gods being Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, Liszt, Brahms, Richard Strauss and, above all, Wagner, I should consider myself unfit to write this book if I failed to realize the debt modern music owes to Bach, and that the more modern the music the greater the debt.

Bach in Modern Music.

One of the most remarkable phenomena in the history of the art—and a generalization like this is as much in place in discussing pianoforte music as elsewhere, because the instrument has had so much to do with the evolution of music—is the gap between Bach and modern music. While the following must not be taken too literally, it is true in general that Bach had little or no influence on the age that immediately came after him, the classical age of music, that age which we sum up in the names of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, the age of the sonata and the symphony. The three masters mentioned probably would have developed and

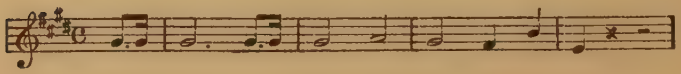
composed much as they did had Bach never lived. But when a more modern composer, a romanticist like Wagner, wanted to enrich the means of musical expression handed down to him from the classical period, he reached back to Bach and combined Bach's teeming counterpoint with the harmonic system which had been inherited from Beethoven. To understand just what this means, to appreciate the influence Bach has had upon modern music and why he had little or none on the classical composers, it is necessary for the reader to have at least a reasonably clear conception of what that counterpoint is and wherein it differs from harmony; for with Bach counterpoint reached its climax, and all the possibilities of the style having been exhausted by him, music of necessity took a turn in another direction under the classicists and developed harmonically instead of contrapuntally; so that it can be said that modern music derives its counterpoint from Bach, its harmony from Beethoven, and its combination of the two systems from Wagner.

There is another reason why the meaning of counterpoint should be explained and the difference between counterpoint and harmony be made clear to the reader now. Nearly all the early music, the music that preceded Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, and that sometimes is to be found on recital programs, is contrapuntal —written in counterpoint. As I have said before, it would be much easier to start with the sonata form, with harmony instead of counterpoint, for of the two harmony is the simpler. But we must "face the music" —the music of the old contrapuntal composers—and

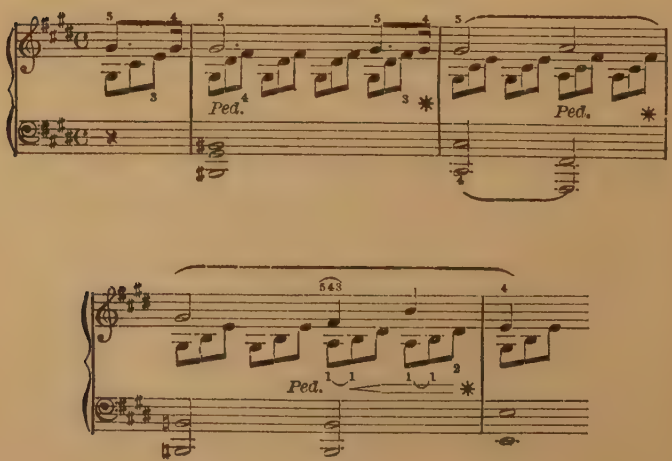
the best way to do this is to explain what harmony and counterpoint are and wherein they differ.

Harmony and Counterpoint.

A melody or theme is a rational progression of single tones. Here is the melody or theme with which Beethoven begins the familiar "Moonlight Sonata":



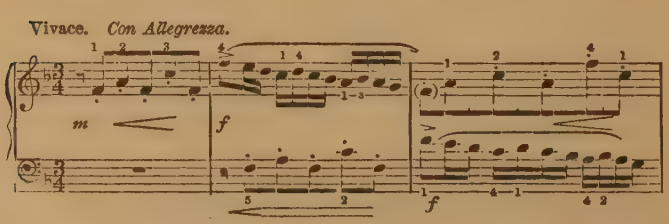
It is a melody, but it does not constitute harmony, for harmony is the rational combination of several tones, as distinguished from the rational progression of single tones which constitute melody. But when Beethoven adds an accompaniment to his theme and it becomes:



the passage also becomes harmony, since it is an example of the rational combination of several tones. As has often been pointed out in books on music, and probably often will have to be pointed out again, because as a mistake it is to be classed with the hardy perennials, melody is not harmony, but only a part of it. When, however, a composer conceives a theme or melody he usually does so with the purpose of combining it with an accompaniment that shall support it and throw it into bold and striking relief. Composers of the contrapuntal school, on the other hand, conceived a theme, not for the purpose of supporting it with an accompaniment, but in order to combine it with another or with several other equally important themes. That, in a general way, is the difference between harmony and counterpoint.

In harmony, then, or, more strictly speaking, in music composed according to the harmonic system, of which the "Moonlight Sonata" is a good example, the theme, the melody, stands out from the accompaniment, which is subordinate. Counterpoint, on the other hand, rests on the combination of several themes, each of equal importance. This is the reason why, when there is a fugue or other complicated contrapuntal work on the program of a pianoforte recital, the average listener is apt to find it dry and uninteresting. His ear readily can distinguish the themes of a sonata, which usually are heard one at a time and stand out clearly from the accompaniment, but it has not been trained to unravel the themes of the fugue as they travel along together. Counterpoint, the term being derived from the Latin *contra punctum,* which means point against point or

note against note, when complicated, as in a fugue, is about the most elaborate kind of music there is, and a person who is unable to grasp a fugue may console himself with the thought that, excepting for the elect, it is a pretty stiff dose to swallow at the very beginning of a recital.

There are, however, simpler pieces of counterpoint than a fugue. Sometimes, as in the charming little "Gavotte" by Padre Martini, which now and then figures among the lighter numbers on the programs of historical recitals, the contrapuntist combines a theme with itself, or, rather, "imitates" it, which is a simple form of the canon. Another form of canon is the round of which "Three Blind Mice" is a familiar example. How many people, when singing this, have realized that they were being initiated into that mysterious thing known as counterpoint? A comparatively simple form

of counterpoint is well illustrated by a dapper little piece in Bach's "Two-Part Inventions," in which the spirited theme given out by the right hand answers itself a bar later in the left, an "imitation" which crops out again and again in the piece and gives it somewhat the character of a canon.

For any one who wishes to become acquainted with

Bach there is nothing better than these "Two-Part Inventions," especially the fascinating little piece from which I have just quoted, compact, buoyant and gay, even "pert," as I once heard a young girl characterize it; a perfect example of old Father Bach in moments of relaxation when he has laid aside his periwig and is amusing himself at his clavichord.

What a Fugue Is.

Bach's fugues, and especially his "Well-Tempered Clavichord," forty-eight preludes and fugues in all the keys, form the climax of contrapuntal music. Goethe once said that "the history of the world is a mighty fugue in which the voice of nation after nation becomes audible." This is a freely poetic definition of that highly complicated musical form, the fugue. Let me attempt to illustrate it in a different way.

Imagine that a composer who is an adept in counterpoint places four pianists at different pianofortes, and that he gives a different theme to each of them, or a theme to one and modified versions of it to the others. He starts the first pianist, after a few bars nods to the second to join in with his theme, and so on successively with the other two. It might be supposed that when the second player joins in, the two themes sounding together would make discord, which would be aggravated by the addition of the third and fourth. But, instead, they have been so conceived by the contrapuntist that they sound well together as they chase and answer each other, or run counter to and

parallel and enter into many different combinations, sometimes flowing along smoothly, at other times surging and striving, yet always, in the case of a truly great fugue, borne along by a momentum as inexorable as the march of Fate. Of course, it must not be supposed, because I have called four pianists into action in order to emphasize how distinct are these themes, which yet, when united, are found to blend together, that several players are required for the performance of a complicated piece of counterpoint like a fugue. What is demanded of the player is entire independence of the fingers, so that he can clearly differentiate between the themes and enable the hearer to distinguish them apart, even in their most complicated combinations. An edition of Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavichord" by Bernardus Boekelman prints the themes in different colors, so that they are easy to trace through all their interweaving, and is interesting to study from.

The Fugue and the Virtuoso.

In his book, "Beethoven and His Forerunners," Daniel Gregory Mason devotes a paragraph toward dispelling the mystery regarding the fugue that prevails with the public, and points out that "the actual formal rules, despite the awe they have immemorially aroused in the popular mind, are few and simple. After the first announcement of the subject by a single voice, it is answered by a second voice, at an interval of a fifth above; then again stated by a third voice, and answered by a fourth. This process goes on until each voice has

had a chance to enunciate the motif, after which the conversation goes on more freely; the subject is announced in divers keys, by divers voices; episodes, in a congruous style, vary the monotony; at last the subject is emphatically asserted by the various voices in quick succession (*stretto*), and with some little display or grandiloquence the piece comes to an end."

Further along in the same book Mr. Mason has a page of apostrophe to the Bach fugues. When he characterizes them as "the first great independent monuments of pure music," and refers to their "consummate beauty of structure," he pays them an eminently just tribute. But when he speaks of the "profundity, poignancy and variety of feeling they express," I am inclined to quote his own qualifying sentence from the next page of his book: "It is true, nevertheless, not only that the fugue form makes the severest demands on the attention and intelligence of the listener, but also that, because of the ecclesiastical origin and polyphonic style, it is incapable of the kind of highly personal, secular expression that it was in the spirit of the seventeenth century to demand." The same is even more true of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The progress of music toward individual freedom of expression on the part of the composer, and equally so on the part of the interpreter, has been steady, and when, through the very perfection which Bach imparted to counterpoint, it ceased to attract composers as a means of expression because he had accomplished so much there was nothing more left for them to do along the same lines, the progress I have indicated received a great lift and stimulus.

What Counterpoint Lacks.

The lack of highly personal expression in contrapuntal compositions explains why most concert-goers find them less attractive than modern music. The "D Minor Toccata and Fugue" or the "Chromatic Fantasie and Fugue" by Bach, even in the arrangements of Tausig and Liszt, on the program of a pianoforte recital, are tolerated because of the modern pieces that come later. Nine out of ten persons in the house would rather omit them. Why deny so obvious a fact, especially when it is easy enough to explain? To follow a contrapuntal composition intelligently requires a highly trained ear. Moreover, in such a work as a Bach fugue the individuality of the player is of less importance than in modern music. Yet a virtuoso's individuality is the very thing that distinguishes him from other virtuosos and attracts the public to his concerts, while those of other players may be poorly attended. I firmly believe in personality of the virtuoso or singer or orchestral conductor, for in it lies the secret of individual interpretation, the reason why the performance of one person is fascinating or thrilling and that of another not. Modern music affords the player full scope to interpret it according to his own mood and fancy, to color it with his own personality, whereas contrapuntal music exists largely for itself alone. It is music for music's sake, not for the sake of interpreting some mood, some feeling, or of painting in tone colors something quite outside of music. The player of counterpoint is restricted in his power of expression

by the very formulas of the science or art of the contrapuntist. We may marvel that Bach was able to move so freely within its restricted forms. But I think it true that it is far more interesting for a person even of only moderate proficiency as a player to work out, however awkwardly, a Bach fugue for himself on the pianoforte than to hear it played by some one else, however great; for, cheap and easy as it is to protest in high-sounding phrases about the duty of the interpreter to subordinate himself to the composer, and against what I am about to say, I nevertheless make bold to affirm that it is the province of the virtuoso to express himself, his own personality, his moods, his temperament, his subjective or even his subconscious self, through music; and in music that is purely contrapuntal there is a barrier to this individual power of expression.

The Mission of the Player.

We often hear it said of the greatest contemporary pianist that he is a great Chopin player, but not a great Bach player. He could not be, and at the same time be the greatest living virtuoso. It is the worshiper of tradition, the reserved, continent, scholarly player, the player who converts a Chopin nocturne into an icicle and a Schubert impromptu into a snowball, who revels in counterpoint—the player who always is slavishly subordinating himself to what he is pleased to call the "composer's intentions" and forgets that the truly great virtuoso creates when he interprets. Some times the virtuoso may go too far and depart too much

from the character of the piece he is playing, subjecting it more than is permissible to his temporary mood; but it is better for art to err on the side of originality, provided it is not bizarre or freakish, than on the side of subserviency to tradition.

While I have no desire, in writing as above, to exalt unduly the virtuoso, the interpreter of music, at the expense of the composer, I must insist that the great player also is creative, in the sense that every time he plays a work he creates it over again from his own point of view, and thus has at least a share in its parentage. Indeed, it seems more difficult to attain exalted rank as a virtuoso than to gain immortality as a composer. The world has produced two epoch-making virtuosos—Paganini on the violin, Liszt on the piano. Within about the same period covered by the careers of these two there have been half a dozen or even more composers, each of whom marks an epoch in some phase of the art. "The interpretive artist," says Henry G. Hanchett in his "Art of the Musician," "deserves a place no whit beneath that of the composer. No two composers have influenced musical progress in America more strongly than have Anton Rubinstein by his *playing*, and Theodore Thomas, who was not a composer."

Music as a Science.

But, to return to Bach and the other contrapuntists, music owes them an immense debt on the technical side. And right here, so universal are the deductions that can be drawn from the program of a pianoforte

recital, it should be pointed out that music differs from other arts in having for its basis a profound and complicated science, a science that concerns itself with the relations of the notes of the musical scale to each other. Upon this science are based alike the "coon song" and the Wagner music-drama. What is true of "Tristan" is true also of "Bedelia." Each makes its draft upon the science of music; the music-drama, of course, in a far greater degree than the song. This science has its text-books with their theorems and problems, like any other science, and theoretical musicians have produced learned and useful works on the subject which the great mass of laymen, many virtuosos, and indeed the average professional musician, may never have heard of, let alone have read. For a person not intuitively predisposed toward the subject would find the science of music as difficult to master as integral calculus; nor, in order to appreciate music, or even to interpret it, is it necessary to be versed in this science. A virtuoso can play a chord of the ninth, the listener can be thrilled by the virtuoso's playing of the chord of the ninth, without either of them knowing that there is such a thing as the chord of the ninth.

Science versus Feeling

In fact, the person who is so well versed in the science of music that he can mentally analyze a composition while listening to it is apt to be so absorbed in the mere process of technical analysis that he misses its esthetic, its emotional significance. Thus a person may

be very musical without being musical at all. He may have profound knowledge of music as a science and remain untouched by music as an art, just as a physicist may be an authority on the laws of light and color, yet stand unmoved before a great painting. With some people music is all science, with others all art, and I think the latter have the better of it. A musical genius is equipped both ways. The great composer employs the science of music as an aid in giving expression to his creative impulse. He makes science of service to the cause of art. Otherwise, while he might produce something that was absolutely correct, it would make no artistic appeal whatsoever. Thousands of symphonies have been composed, performed and forgotten. They were "well made," constructed with scientific accuracy from beginning to end, but had no value as art; and music is a profound science applied to the production of a great art.

The composer, then, masters the science of music and bends it to his genius. If he is a great genius, he soon will discover that certain rules which his predecessors regarded as hard and fast, as inviolable, can be violated with impunity. He will discover new tone combinations, and thus enrich the science and make it serve the purposes of the art with greater efficiency than before he came upon the scene. And always the composers who have grown gray under the old system, the system upon which the new genius is grafting his new ideas, and the theorists and critics, who are slaves of tradition, will throw up their hands in horror and cry out that he is despoiling the art and robbing it of all that is sacred and beautiful, whereas he is adding to its scope

and potency. Did not even so broad-minded a composer as Schumann say, "The trouble with Wagner is that he is not a musician"? So far was Wagner ahead of his time! While the great composer nearly always begins where his predecessors left off, he is sure to outstrip them later on. Even so rugged a genius as Beethoven is somewhat under Mozart's influence in his first works, and Wagner's "Rienzi" is distinctly Meyerbeerian. But genius soon learns to soar with its own wings and to look down with indifference upon the little men who are discharging their shafts of envy, malice and ignorance.

That "Ear for Music."

And while I am on the subject of the scientific musician *versus* the music lover, the pedant *versus* the innovator, I might as well refer to those people who have in a remarkable degree what is popularly known as "an ear for music," and who are able to remember and to play "by ear" anything they hear played or sung, even if it is for the first time. This ear for music, again, is something quite different from scientific knowledge of music or from the emotional sensitiveness which makes the music-lover. It is a purely physical endowment, and may—in fact, usually does—exist without a corresponding degree of real feeling for music. It is, of course, a highly valuable adjunct to a genuine musical genius like a Mozart or a Schubert and to a genuine virtuoso. It is related of Von Bülow that his ear for music and his memory were so prodigious that once, while traveling in the cars, he read over the

printed pages of a new composition, and on arriving at his destination, played it, from memory, at his concert. William Mason, who studied with Liszt, witnessed his master perform a similar feat. The average untrained person with a musical ear, however, instead of being a genius, is apt to become a nuisance, playing all kinds of cheap music in and out of season—a sort of peripatetic pianola, without the advantage of being under control. Such persons, moreover, usually are born without a soft pedal.

Bach and the Weather Bureau.

This digression, which I have made in order to discuss the difference between music as a science and music as an art, a distinction which, I have pointed out, often is so marked that a person may be thoroughly equipped on the scientific side of music without being sensitive to its beauty as an art, seemed to me necessary at this stage. I am reminded by it of the distinction which Edmund Clarence Stedman, in his "Nature and Elements of Poetry," so wittily draws between the indications of a storm as described by a poet and by the official prognostications of the Weather Bureau. Mr. Stedman quotes two stanzas:

"When descends on the Atlantic the gigantic
Storm-wind of the Equinox,
Landward in his wrath he scourges the toiling surges,
Laden with seaweed from the rocks."

And this stanza by a later balladist;

"The East Wind gathered, all unknown,
A thick sea-cloud his course before;
He left by night the frozen zone,
And smote the cliffs of Labrador;
He lashed the coasts on either hand,
And betwixt the Cape and Newfoundland,
Into the bay his armies pour."

All this impersonation and fancy is translated by the Weather Bureau into something like the following:

"An area of extreme low pressure is rapidly moving up the Atlantic Coast, with wind and rain. Storm-center now off Charleston, S. C. Wind N. E.; velocity, 54. Barometer, 29.6. The disturbance will reach New York on Wednesday, and proceed eastward to the Banks and Bay of St. Lawrence. Danger signals ordered for all North Atlantic ports."

Far be it from me to imply that contrapuntal music in general or Bach in particular represents the Weather Bureau. None the less is it true that Bach appeals more strongly to the scientific musician than to the music-lover who seeks in music a secondary meaning—love, passion, grief; the mood awakened by the contemplation of a forest landscape with its murmuring foliage, a boundless prairie, or the unquiet sea.

The technical indebtedness of modern music to Bach is so immense, and the artistic probity of the man himself was so wonderful, for he worked calmly on, in spite of what was worse than opposition—neglect—that I think the tendency on the part of Bach enthusi-

asts, while not overrating the importance of the influence he has had during the past fifty years or more, is to underrate others as compared with him. When critics declare that one virtuoso or another is not a great Bach player, are they not ignoring what is a simple fact—that no player can make the same appeal through Bach that it is possible for him to make through modern music, and that, as a rule, when a virtuoso, however good a musician he may be, places Bach on his program, he does so not from predilection, but as a tribute to one of the greatest names in musical history? It seems to me that the extreme Bach enthusiasts can be divided into two classes—musicians who are able to appreciate what he did for music on its technical side, and people who want to create the impression that they know more than they really do.

The Bacon, Not the Shakespeare, of Music.

Bach's greatest importance to music lies in his having treated it in the abstract and for itself alone, so that when he penned a work he did this not to bring home to the listener the significance of a certain mood or situation, but from pure delight in following out a musical problem to its most extreme development. Algebra makes mighty interesting study, but furnishes rather a poor subject for dramatic reading. This simile must, of course, be taken with a grain of salt, and merely as illustrating in a general way my contention that Bach's great service to music was technical and intellectual. He was the Bacon, not the Shakespeare,

of music, and the contrapuntal structure that he reared is to the art what the Baconian theorem is to logic. We can imagine the roamer in the field of higher mathematics suddenly becoming excited as he sees the end of the path leading to the solution of some complicated problem in full view. Thus there may be moments when even the cube root becomes emotional, the logarithmic theory a dissipation, and differential calculus an orgy. So, too, Bach put an enthusiasm into his work that often threatens to sweep the student off his intellectuals and make him regard a fugue as a scientifically constructed fairyland. Moreover, there are Bach pieces in which the counterpoint supports the purest kind of melody, like the air for the G string which Thomas arranged for his orchestra with all the strings, save the double basses, in unison, and played with an effect that never failed to secure a repeat and sometimes a double encore.

What Wagner Learned from Bach.

If we bear in mind that counterpoint is the artistic combination of several themes, each of equal or nearly equal importance, and that Bach was the greatest master of the contrapuntal school and forms its climax, we can, with a little thought, appreciate what his service has been to modern music. When Wagner devised his system of leading motives it was not for the purpose of employing them singly, like labels tacked onto each character, thing or symbol in the drama, but of combining them, welding them together, when occasion arose, in order to give musical significance and expression to each and every dramatic situation as the

story unfolded itself. A shining example of this is found in that wonderful last scene of "Die Walküre," the so-called Magic Fire Scene. *Wotan* has said farewell to *Brünnhilde;* has thrown her into a profound slumber upon the rock; has surrounded her with a circle of magic flame which none but a hero may penetrate to awaken and win her. How is this scene treated in the score? In the higher register of the orchestra crackles and sparkles the Magic Fire Motive, the Slumber Motive gently rising and falling with the flames; while the superb Siegfried Motive (signifying that the yet unborn *Siegfried* is the hero destined to break through the fiery circle) resounds in the brass, and there also is a suggestion of the tender strains with which *Wotan* bade *Brünnhilde* farewell. The welding together of these four motives into one glorious whole of the highest dramatic significance is Wagnerian counterpoint—science employed in the service of art and with thrilling effect. Another passage from Wagner, the closing episode in the "Meistersinger" Vorspiel, often is quoted to show Wagner's skill in the use of counterpoint, although he employs it so spontaneously that few people stop to consider how scientific his musical structure is. W. J. Henderson, in his capital book, "The Orchestra and Orchestral Music," relates that on one occasion a professional musician was engaged in a discussion of Wagner in the corridor of the Metropolitan Opera House, while inside the orchestra was playing this "Meistersinger" Vorspiel.

"It is a pity," said this wise man, in a condescending manner, "but Wagner knows absolutely nothing about counterpoint."

At that very instant the orchestra was singing five different melodies at once; and, as Anton Seidl was the conductor, they were all audible.

Wagner scores, in fact, teem with counterpoint, but counterpoint that palpitates, that thrills with emotion. Note that Mr. Henderson speaks of melodies. Wagner's leading motives are melodies, sometimes very brief, but always expressive, and not, like the themes of the old contrapuntists, conceived mainly for the sake of being combined scientifically with other themes equally adaptable to that purpose. Counterpoint may be, and usually is, something very dry and formal. But from the crucible of the master magician, Richard Wagner, it flows a glowing, throbbing, pulsating stream of most precious metal.

The Language of an Epoch.

In the difference between the counterpoint of Bach and the counterpoint of Wagner lies the difference between two epochs separated by a long period of time. With Bach counterpoint was everything; with Wagner merely an incident. It will help us to a better understanding of music if we bear in mind that the two great composers of each epoch spoke in the music of that epoch. Thus Bach spoke in the language of counterpoint. His themes, however greatly they may vary among themselves, all bear the stamp of motives devised for the purpose of entering into formal combinations and of being developed according to the stringent rules of counterpoint. Beethoven's are more individual, more

expressive of moods and emotions. Yet about them, too, there is something formal. They, too, are devised to be treated according to certain rules—to be molded into sonatas. But with Wagner we feel that music has thrown off the shackles of arbitrary form, of dry rule and rote. His motives suggest absolute freedom of expression and development, through previously undreamed-of wealth of harmony and contrapuntal combinations which are mere incidents, not the chief purpose of their being. Each represents some person, impulse or symbol in a drama; represents them with such eloquence and power that, once we know for what they stand, we need but hear them again or recall them to memory to have the corresponding episode in the music-drama in which they occur brought vividly before our eyes. Bach's language was the language of the fugue; Beethoven's the language of the sonata. Fugue and sonata are musical forms. Wagner spoke the language of no form. His language is that of the free, plastic, unfettered leading motive—the language of liberated music, of which he himself was the liberator!

Whether Wagner would have devised his system of leading motives without the wonderful structure of counterpoint left by Bach; whether Bach's counterpoint, his combination of themes, suggested the system of leading motives to the greatest master of them all, we probably never shall know. The system, in its completeness, doubtless is Wagner's own; but when he came to put it into practical effect he found the rich heritage left by Bach ready to hand. One of Wagner's instructors in musical theory, and the one from whose teaching he himself declares he learned most, was Theodor

Weinlich, one of Bach's successors as Cantor of the Thomasschule at Leipsic. Wagner quotes him as having said: "You may never find it necessary to compose a fugue, but the ability to do it often may stand you in good stead." And the Cantor set him exercises in all varieties of counterpoint. There thus is presented the phenomenon of a composer who for nearly a century after his death had little or no influence on the course of music, suddenly becoming a potent force in its most modern development.

Bach in the Recital Hall.

Bach is so supreme in his own line that contrapuntal music, so far as the pianoforte is concerned, may be dismissed with him. Händel, too, it is true, was a master of the contrapuntal school, but he belongs to the chapter on oratorio. Bach's pianoforte works in smaller form are the "Two-Part Inventions" already mentioned; the "Three-Part Inventions," which go a step farther in contrapuntal treatment, and the "Partitas," the six "French Suites" and the six "English Suites."

These partitas and suites are the most graceful and charming efflorescence of the contrapuntal school, and much could be accomplished toward making Bach a popular composer if they figured more frequently on recital programs. They are made up of the dance forms of the day—allemandes, courants, bourrées, sarabandes, minuets, gavottes, gigues, with airs thrown in for good measure; the partitas and English suites furnished with more elaborate introductions, while the French suites begin with allemandes. Cheerful and even frisky as

some of the dance pieces in these compositions are, it must not be supposed that they were intended to be danced to when contrapuntally treated—no more than Chopin intended that people should glide through a ballroom to the music of his waltzes.

Besides "sonatas" for pianoforte with one or more other instruments, among them the six "Sonatas for Pianoforte and Violin" (the term sonata as employed here must not be confused with the classical sonata form as developed by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven), Bach composed concertos for from one to four pianofortes. Of these latter the one best known in this country is the so-called "Triple Concerto," for three pianofortes with accompaniment of string quartet, which can at will be increased to a string orchestra. In 1873, during Rubinstein's tour, I heard it played in New York, under Theodore Thomas's direction, by Rubinstein, William Mason and Sebastian Bach Mills, and three years later by Mme. Annette Essipoff, Mr. Mason and Mr. Boscovitz. Mason, when he was studying under Liszt in Weimar in 1854, had performed it with two fellow-pupils, and Liszt had been very particular in regard to the manner in which they played the many embellishments (*agréments*) which were used in Bach's time. Later, Mason found that whenever three pianists came together for the purpose of playing this concerto they were certain to disagree regarding "the agreements," and usually wasted much time in discussing them, especially the mordent.

Rubinstein and the "Triple Concerto."

Accordingly, when Mason played the "Triple Concerto" with Rubinstein and Mills, he came to the rehearsal armed with a book by Friedrich Wilhelm Marburg, published in Berlin in 1765, and giving written examples of all the *agréments.* "I told Rubinstein about my ancient authority," says Mr. Mason in his entertaining "Memories of a Musical Life," "adding that we should be spared the tediousness of a discussion as to the manner of playing.

" 'Let me see the old book,' said Rubinstein. Running over the leaves he came to the illustrations of the mordent. The moment his eyes fell upon them he exclaimed: 'All wrong; here is the way I play it!' " And that ended the usefulness of "the old book" for that particular occasion, the other two pianists adopting, without comment, Rubinstein's method, which Mr. Mason intimates was incorrect.

When, at the rehearsal with Essipoff, the mordent came up for discussion she exclaimed: " 'I cannot play these things; show me how they are done.' After repeated trials, however," records Mr. Mason, "she failed to get the knack of playing them, as indeed so many pianists do; so at the rehearsal she omitted them and left their performance to Boscovitz and me."

"The Well-Tempered Clavichord."

Bach's monumental work for pianoforte, however, is "The Well-Tempered Clavichord," consisting of forty-eight preludes and fugues in all keys. I find much prevalent ignorance among amateurs regarding the

meaning of "well-tempered" as used in this title. I have heard people explain it by saying that when a pianist had mastered the book he was "tempered" like steel and ready for any difficulties that other music might present! I even have heard a rotund and affable person say that "The Well-Tempered Clavichord" was so entitled because when you listened to its preludes and fugues it smoothed out your temper and made you feel good-natured! In point of fact, the word is difficult to explain in untechnical language. It relates, however, to Bach's method of tuning his clavichord—another boon which he conferred upon music. In general, the system may be explained by the statement that certain tone intervals, which theoretically are pure, practically result in harmonic discrepancies, which Bach's "tempered" system corrected. In other words, slight and practically imperceptible inaccuracies are introduced in the tuning in order to counterbalance the greater faults which result when tuning is absolutely correct from a theoretical point of view; just as, in navigating the high northern waters, you are obliged to make allowance for variations of the compass. The system was not actually the invention of Bach, but he did so much to promote its adoption that it is associated with his name. Before it was adopted it was impossible to employ all the major and minor keys on clavichords and harpsichords, and on the pianofortes, just beginning to come into use. It became possible under the tempered system of tuning, and was illustrated by Bach in "The Well-Tempered Clavichord," each major and minor key being represented by a prelude and fugue.

Besides the system of tuning in "equal temperament," Bach modernized the technique of fingering by introducing the freer and more frequent employment of the hitherto neglected thumb and little finger. The services of this great man to music, therefore, were threefold. He left us his teeming counterpoint, upon which modern music draws so freely; he promoted the system of tuning in equal temperament; and he laid the foundation of modern pianoforte technique, and so of modern virtuosity.

A King's Tribute to Bach.

Besides being a great composer, Bach's traits as a man were most admirable. He was uncompromising in his convictions, sturdy, honest and upright. His fixedness of purpose is shown by an anecdote of his boyhood. In his tenth year he lost his parents and went to live with an elder brother, who was so jealous of his superior talents that he refused him the loan of a manuscript volume of music by composers of the day. Obtaining possession of it without his brother's knowledge, Bach secretly copied it at night by moonlight, the task covering something like six months. His reward was to have it taken away by his brother, who accidentally discovered him playing from it. Fortunately, this brother died soon afterward, and Bach recovered his treasure.

While it is true that Bach remained unappreciated by the great mass of his contemporaries, there were exceptions, a notable one being the music-loving king,

Frederick the Great of Prussia, whose service the composer's second son, Philipp Emanuel Bach, entered in 1746. At the king's earnest urging, Philipp Emanuel induced his father to visit Potsdam the following year. The king, who had arranged a concert at the palace, was about to begin playing on the flute, when an officer entered and handed him a list of the strangers who had arrived at Potsdam. Glancing over it, Frederick discovered Bach's name. "Gentlemen," he exclaimed, "old Bach is here!" And nothing would do save that the master must be brought immediately into the royal presence, before he even had time to doff his traveling clothes.

The king had purchased several of the pianofortes recently constructed by Gottfried Silbermann and had them distributed throughout the palace. Bach and the assemblage went from room to room, the composer playing and improvising on the different instruments. Finally he asked the king to set him a fugue theme, and on this he extemporized in such masterly fashion that all who heard him, the king included, broke out into rounds of applause. On his return to Leipsic, Bach dedicated to Frederick the Great a work which he entitled "The Musical Sacrifice" (or offering), which he based upon the fugue theme the king had given him.

No other instance of musical heredity is comparable with that afforded by the Bach family. Dr. Theodore Baker, in his "Biographical Dictionary of Musicians," gives a list of no less than twenty Bachs, all of the same line, whom he deems worthy of mention, and who covered a period ranging from 1604 to 1845,

when the great Bach's grandson and last male descendant, Wilhelm Friedrich Ernst Bach, died in Berlin. Thus for two hundred and forty-one years the Bach family was professionally active in music.

III

FROM FUGUE TO SONATA

IF a pianoforte recital which begins with a Bach fugue continues with a Beethoven sonata, it does not require a very discriminating ear to note the difference between the two. The Beethoven sonata is in a style so entirely distinct from that of the fugue, and sounds so wholly unlike it, that it seems as if Bach had exerted no influence whatsoever upon the greatest master of the period that followed his death. Although Haydn and Mozart were nearer Bach in point of time than Beethoven was, a sonata by either of them, if it chanced to be on the program, would show the same difference in style, the same radical departure from the works of the master of counterpoint, as the Beethoven sonata.

The question naturally suggests itself, did Bach's influence cease with his death? And the fact that this question calls for an answer and that this answer leads to a general consideration of the interim between Bach and Beethoven, again shows how broad in its scope as an instrument is the pianoforte and how comprehensive in its application to music as a whole is the music of that instrument. Two works on a recital program furnish a legitimate basis for a discussion of two important periods in the development of music!

Who would have thought there was so much to a pianoforte recital?

"It would have been an eminently pardonable mistake for any intelligent musician to have fallen into, in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, if he had concluded that Johann Sebastian Bach's career was a failure, and that his influence upon the progress of his art amounted to the minimum conceivable. Indeed, the whole course of musical history in every branch went straight out of the sphere of his activity for a long while; his work ceased to have any significance to the generation which succeeded him, and his eloquence fell upon deaf ears. A few of his pupils went on writing music of the same type as his in a half-hearted way, and his own most distinguished son, Philipp Emanuel, adopted at least the artistic manner of working up his details and making the internal organization of his works alive with figure and rhythm. But even he, the sincerest composer of the following generation, was infected by the complacent, polite superficiality of his time; and he was forced, in accepting the harmonic principle of working in its Italian phase, to take with it some of the empty formulas and conventional tricks of speech which had become part of its being, and which sometimes seem to belie the genuineness of his utterances and put him somewhat out of touch with his whole-hearted father."

This passage from one of the most admirably thought-out books on music I know of, Hubert Parry's "Evolution of the Art of Music," is no exaggeration.

For many years after Bach's death, for nearly a century in fact, his influence was but little felt. And yet so aptly does the development of art adjust itself to human needs and aspirations, the very neglect into which Bach fell turned music into certain channels from which it derived the greater freedom of expression essential to its progress and gave it the tinge of romanticism which is the essence of modern music.

The greatness of Johann Sebastian Bach, on the technical side at least, now is so universally acknowledged, and professional musicians understand so well what their art owes to him, we are apt to think of him as the only musician of his day, whereas his significance was but little appreciated by his contemporaries. There were, in fact, other composers actively working on other lines and turning music in the direction it was destined to follow immediately after Bach's death—and for its own ultimate good, be it observed. The simple fact is, that pure counterpoint culminated in Bach. What he accomplished was so stupendous that his successors could not keep up with him. They became exhausted before they even were prepared to begin where he left off. And yet the reaction from Bach was, as I have indicated, absolutely necessary to the further progress of music.

The scheme of musical development which the reader should bear in mind if he desires to understand music, and to arrive at that understanding with some kind of system in his progress, was briefly as follows:

Three Periods of Musical Development.

First we have counterpoint, the welding together of several themes each of equal importance. This style of composition culminated in Bach. Its most elaborate form of expression was the fugue; but it also employed the canon and impressed into its service certain minor forms like the allemande, courant, chaçonne, gavotte, saraband, gigue, and minuet.

Next, after Bach music began to develop according to the harmonic system, or, if I may be permitted for the sake of clarity to use an expression which technically is incorrect, according to the melodic system. That is, instead of combining several themes, composers took one theme or melody and supported it with an accompaniment so that the melody stood out in clear relief. This first decided melodic development covers the classical period, the period after Bach to Beethoven, and its highest form of expression was the sonata, which in the orchestra became the symphony.

The romantic period comes after Beethoven. This, to characterize it by the readiest means, by something external, something the eye can see, is the "single piece" period, the period in which the impromptu of Schubert, the song without words of Mendelssohn, the nocturne of Chopin, the novelette of Schumann, takes the place of the sonata, which consists of a group of pieces or movements. Composers begin to find a too exacting insistence upon correctness of form irritating. Expression becomes of more importance than form, which is promptly violated if it interferes with the composer's trend of thought or feeling. Pieces are

written in certain moods, and their melody is developed so as to follow and give full expression to the mood in which it is conceived. New harmonies are fearlessly invoked for the same purpose. Everything centres in the idea that music exists not as an accessory to form, but for the free expression of emotion. In his useful and handy "Dictionary of Musical Terms," Theodore Baker defines a nocturne as a title for a piano piece "of a dreamily romantic or sentimental character, but lacking a distinctive form." When we see the title "Sonata" over a composition we think of form. When we see the title "Nocturne" we think of mood, not manner. The title arouses within us, by anticipation, the very feeling, the very mood, the very emotional condition which the composer is seeking to express. The form in which he seeks to express it is wholly a secondary matter. A composition is a sonata because it follows a certain formal development. It is a nocturne because it is "dreamily romantic or sentimental." In no better way, perhaps, could the difference between the classical period of music and the romantic period which set in after Beethoven be explained. The romanticist is no more hampered by form than the writer of poetry or fiction is by facts. Form dominates feeling in classical music, feeling dominates form in romantic music.

We still are and, happily, ever shall remain in the romantic period. The greatest of all romanticists and, up to the present time, the greatest of all composers is Richard Wagner, whose genius will be appreciated more and more as years go by until, as may be the case, a still greater one will arise; although as dramatic

literature culminated in Shakespeare, so music may have found its greatest master for all time in Wagner. Wagner, of course, was not a composer for the pianoforte, but when he reached back and to the fuller harmony inherited from Beethoven added the counterpoint of Bach, thus combining the two great systems of composition, he indicated the only method of progress possible for music of all kinds.

Rise of the Melodic School.

It must not be supposed that the melodic school which came in after Bach and which, so far as the classical form of the sonata is concerned, culminated in Beethoven, was the mushroom growth of a night. So much has been said of Bach that a person unfamiliar with the history of music might draw the erroneous conclusion that Bach was the only composer worth mentioning before the classical period and Germany the only country in which music had flourished. On the contrary, Bach was the climax of a school to which several countries had each contributed its share, partly vocal, partly instrumental. Palestrina's name naturally comes to mind as representative of the early period of Italian church music; there also was the "Belgian Orpheus," Orlandus Lassus (or Lasso), the greatest composer of the Flemish school; and England had its Gibbons and other madrigal composers. Their music was vocal and requires to be considered more thoroughly under the head of vocal music, but it also was contrapuntal and played its part in the general development of the art before Bach came upon the scene. Of

course, there also was instrumental music in counterpoint before Bach's day. There is "Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book," a manuscript collection of music made either during her reign or shortly afterward and containing pieces for the virginal by Tallis, Bird, Giles, Dr. John Bull and others, including also the madrigalist, Gibbons. The Englishman, Henry Purcell (1658-1695); the Frenchman, François Couperin (1668-1733), who wrote a harpsichord method; the Germans, Hans Leo von Hasler (1564-1612) and Froberger; and the Italian, Frescobaldi—these were some among many composers of counterpoint more or less noted in their day.

Bach, however, brought the art of counterpoint to perfection, so that, so far as it is concerned, he neither required nor even so much as left room for a successor. It may not be pertinent to the argument, yet it may well be questioned whether, had the classical trio, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, endeavored to carry on the contrapuntal school, they would not, in spite of their genius, have relegated music to a more primitive state than it occupied when Bach died. It seems a fortunate circumstance to me that Bach's son appears to have realized his inferiority to his father and that, in consequence, he turned from counterpoint to the development of harmony—the working out of a clearly defined theme or melody supported by accompaniment.

Counterpoint is said to be polyphonic, a term composed of two Greek words signifying many-voiced, the combination in music of several parts or themes. Opposed to it is homophonic, or single-voiced, music, in which one melody or part is supported by an accom-

paniment. Italy, with its genius for the sensuous and emotional in music, already had developed a school of melodic music, and to this Philipp Emanuel Bach turned for a model. In Italy the pianoforte, through its employment for the freer harmonic support of dramatic solo singing in opera, an art form that is indigenous to Italy, gradually had emancipated itself there from counterpoint and acquired a style of its own. Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1644), a famous Italian pianoforte and organ virtuoso, whose first organ recital in St. Peter's, Rome, is said to have attracted an audience of thirty thousand, and whose mantle fell upon his two most renowned pupils, the German, Johann Jacob Froberger, and the Italian, Bernardo Pasquini, not only experimented with our modern keys, seeking to replace with them the old ecclesiastical modes in which Palestrina wrote, but also simplified the method of notation. For even what seems to us so simple a matter as the five-line staff is the result of slow evolution.

Scarlatti's Importance as Composer and Virtuoso.

The Italian genius who gave the greatest impulse to the progress of pianoforte music and who, for his day, immensely improved the technique of pianoforte playing, was Domenico Scarlatti (1683-1757), the famous son of a famous father, Alessandro Scarlatti, the leading dramatic composer of his time. Domenico Scarlatti interests us especially because he is the only one of the early Italians whose work retains an appreciable foothold on modern recital programs. Von Bülow edited selections from his works, and I recall from per-

sonal experience, because I was at the concert, the delight with which some of these were received the first time Von Bülow played them on his initial visit to this country during the season of 1875-76. Amateurs on the outlook for something new (even though it was very old) took up Scarlatti, and this early Italian's suddenly acquired popularity was comparable with the "run" on the Rachmaninoff "Prelude" when it was played here by Siloti many years later.

Scarlatti has been called the founder of modern pianoforte technique. Although he composed for the harpsichord, he understood the instrument so thoroughly and what he wrote for it accords so well with its genius, that by unconscious anticipation it also was adapted to the genius of the modern pianoforte. It still is pianistic; more pianistic and more suitable to the modern repertoire than a good deal of music by greater men who lived considerably later. I should say, for example, that Scarlatti's name is found more frequently on pianoforte recital programs than Mozart's, although Mozart was incomparably the greater genius. But there is about Scarlatti's music such a quaint and primitive charm that one always listens to it with the zest of a discoverer, whereas Mozart's pianoforte music, although more modern, just misses being modern enough. This clever Italian gives us the early beginnings of the sonata form. He merely lisps in sonata accents, it is true, but his lisp is as fascinating as the ingenuous prattle of an attractive child. His best known work, "The Cat's Fugue," the subject of which is said to have been suggested to him by a cat gliding over the keyboard, is indeed contrapuntal. But even

this is a movement in a sonata, and the characteristic of his works as a whole is the fact that in most of them he developed and worked out a melody or theme, and that he established the fundamental outlines of the sonata form.

Comparatively few laymen have more than a vague idea of what is meant by sonata form. To them a sonata simply is a composition consisting of several movements, usually four, three of them of considerable length, with a shorter one (a minuet or scherzo) between the first and second or the second and fourth. A sonata, however, must have one of its movements (and generally it will be found to be the first) written in a certain form. Regarding the Scarlatti sonatas, suffice it to say here that with him the form still is in its primitive simplicity. For example, the true sonata movement as we now understand it employs two themes, the second contrasting with the first. As a rule, Scarlatti is content with one theme. It is the peculiar merit of Philipp Emanuel Bach that he introduced a second theme into his sonatas, or suggested it by striking modulations when he employed only one theme, and thus paved the way for its further elaboration by Joseph Haydn. Mozart elaborated the form still further, and then came Beethoven, with whom the classical period reached its climax and whose sonatas for all practical purposes have completely superseded those of his forerunners.

Rise of the Amateur.

Characteristic of the period of transition from Bach to Beethoven, from the fugue to the sonata, was the development of popular interest in music. Scarlatti begins a brief introduction to a collection of thirty of his pianoforte pieces which were published in 1746, by addressing the "amateur or professor, whoever you be." Significant in this is the inclusion of, in fact the seeming preference given to the amateur. Music of the counterpoint variety had been music for the church, the court and the professional. Now, with the development of the freer harmonic or melodic system, it was growing more in touch with the people. During Philipp Emanuel Bach's life the increase of popular interest in music was remarkable. The titles that began to appear on compositions show that composers were reaching out for a larger public. Bie quotes some of them: "Cecilia Playing on the Pianoforte and Satisfying the Hearing"; "The Busy Muse Clio"; "Pianoforte Practice for the Delight of Mind and Ear, in Six Easy *Galanterie Parties* Adapted to Modern Taste, Composed Chiefly for Young Ladies"; "The Contented Ear and the Quickened Soul"; while Philipp Emanuel Bach inscribes some of his pieces as "easy" or "for ladies." Evidently the "young person" figured as extensively in the calculations of musical composers then as she does now in those of the publishers of fiction. Musical periodicals sprang up like mushrooms—"Musical Miscellany," "Floral Garnerings for Pianoforte Amateurs," "New Music Journal for Encouragement and Entertainment in Solitude at the Pianoforte for the

Skilled and Unskilled," such were some of the titles. These periodicals often went the way of most periodical flesh and in the customary brief period, but they show a quickened public interest in music—the "contented ear and the quickened soul," so to speak.

Changes in Musical Taste.

If I dismiss Philipp Emanuel Bach rather curtly and, in this portion of the book at least, do the same with Haydn and Mozart, this is not because I fail to appreciate their importance in musical history, but because they have failed to retain their hold on the modern pianoforte repertoire. The simple fact is that the pianoforte as an instrument has outgrown their music. We can get more out of it than they gave it. If we bear in mind that the pianoforte, as well as music itself, has developed, it will aid us in understanding why so much music, once considered far in advance of its time and even revolutionary, has so soon become antiquated. Why ignore facts? Some examples of primitive music still survive because they charm us with their quaintness. But the classical period is retiring more and more into the shadow of history. Whatever importance Haydn and Mozart may possess for the student, their pianoforte music, so far as practical program-making is concerned, is to-day a negligible quantity. I remember the time when, as a pupil, I pored with breathless interest over the pages of Mozart's "Sonata in A Minor" and his "Fantasy and Sonata in C Minor." But to-day, when I read in a book published about twenty-five years ago that Mozart indulged in har-

monies, chord progressions and modulations, "sometimes considered of doubtful propriety even now" and "quite as harshly censured as are to-day the similar licenses of free-thinking composers"—I wonder where they are. For his own day, nevertheless, Mozart was an innovator, as every genius is; for it is through those daring deviations of genius from established rule and tradition, which contemporaries regard as unjustifiable license, that art progresses. This should be borne in mind by those who were intolerant toward the opponents of Wagner, yet now are guilty of a similar solecism in proclaiming Richard Strauss a charlatan.

Assuming that the modern pianoforte pupil is but indifferently nourished on the Mozart pabulum, let me add that this composer also was a virtuoso, and by his choice of the pianoforte over the clavichord did much toward making the modern instrument more popular. He also developed the sonata form so that Beethoven found it ready moulded for his genius. In fact the sonata form as we know it is so much a Mozart creation that Mr. Hanchett, in his "Art of the Musician," suggests calling the sonata movement proper a mozarta—a suggestion which I presume will never be adopted.

Beethoven and the Epoch of the Sonata.

In the history of music there are three figures that easily tower above the rest. Each represents an era. They are Bach, who stands for counterpoint, the epoch of the fugue; Beethoven, who represents the epoch of the sonata; Wagner, who represents the epoch of the

music-drama. The first two summed up in themselves certain art forms which others had originated. Bach's root goes back to Palestrina, Beethoven's to Scarlatti. Wagner presents the phenomenon of being both the germ and the full fruition of the art form for which he stands. It is conceivable that the work of these men will at some time fall into desuetude, for in art all things are possible, and the classical period seems to be losing its grip on music more and more every day and we ourselves may live to see the sonata movement become obsolete. It certainly is having less and less vogue, and a composer who now writes a sonata with undeviating allegiance to its classical outlines, deliberately invites neglect, because the listener no longer cares to have his faculties of appreciation restricted by too rigid insistence upon form, preferring that genius should have the utmost latitude and be absolutely untrammeled in giving expression to what it has to say. Nevertheless, music always will bear the impress of these three master minds, just as our language, although we do not speak in blank verse, always will bear the impress of Shakespeare. "I don't think much of that play," exclaimed the countryman, after hearing "Hamlet" for the first time. "It's all made up of quotations!" Equally familiar, not to say colloquial, are certain musical phrases, certain modulations, which have come down to us from the masters.

Although Beethoven no longer is the all-dominant figure in the musical world that he was fifty years ago, and it requires a performance of the "Ninth Symphony" given under specially significant circumstances (such as the conducting of a Felix Weingartner) to at-

tract as many to a concert hall as would be drawn by an ordinary Wagner program, I trust I shall know how to appreciate his importance to the development of musical art and approach him with the reverence that is his due. Like all great men who sum up an epoch, he found certain things ready to hand. The Frenchman, Jean Philippe Rameau (1683-1764), "the creator of the modern system of harmony," had published his "Nouveau Système de Musique Théorique"; the sonata movement from its tentative beginnings under Scarlatti had been developed through Philipp Emanuel Bach, Haydn and Mozart into a definite art form awaiting the final test of a great genius—which Beethoven proved to be.

Beethoven's Slow Development.

I already have pointed out that while pianoforte and orchestra have developed side by side, the general belief that the pianoforte merely has been the handmaiden of the orchestra is a mistaken one. On the contrary, until the end of the classical period, at least, the pianoforte was the pioneer. It has blazed the way for the orchestra and led it, instead of bringing up the rear. Thus the sonata form was developed by the pianoforte and then was handed over by that instrument to the orchestra under the name of symphony, which, the reader should bear in mind, simply is a sonata written for orchestra instead of for the pianoforte. Even Beethoven, before he composed his first symphony, which is his Opus 21, tested his mastery of the form and his ideas regarding certain further developments in it, by

first composing thirteen pianoforte sonatas, including the familar "Pathétique," which used to be to concert programs what Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2" is now—the *cheval de battaille,* on which pianists pranced up and down before the ranks of their astonished audiences and unfortunate amateurs sought to retain their equilibrium.

This experimentation, this comparatively slow development, was characteristic of Beethoven; is, in fact, characteristic of every genius who works from the soul outward. "Like most artists whose spur is more in themselves than in natural artistic facilities, he was very slow to come to any artistic achievement," writes Mr. Parry of Beethoven. "It is almost a law of things that men whose artistic personality is very strong, and who touch the world by the greatness and the power of their expression, come to maturity comparatively late, and sometimes grow greater all through their lives—so it was with Bach, Gluck, Beethoven and Wagner—while men whose aims are more purely artistic and whose main spur is facility of diction, come to the point of production early and do not grow much afterward. Such composers as Mozart and Mendelssohn succeeded in expressing themselves brilliantly at a very early age; but their technical facility was out of proportion to their individuality and their force of human nature, and therefore there is no such surprising difference between the work of their later years and the work of their childhood as there is in the case of Beethoven and Wagner."

In writing sonatas Haydn and Mozart had been satisfied with grace of outward form and a smooth and

pretty flow of melody within that form. Beethoven was a man of intellectual force as well as of musical genius. He applied his intellect to enlarging the sonata form, his musical genius to supplying it with contents worthy of the greater opportunities he himself had created for it. There is a wonderful union of mind and heart in Beethoven's work. The sonata form, as perfected by him, is a monument to his genius. It remains to this day the flower of the classical period.

The Passing of the Sonata.

Nevertheless, the Beethoven sonatas no longer retain the place of pre-eminence once accorded them on pianoforte recital programs. When Von Bülow was in this country during the season of 1875-76 he frequently gave concerts at which he played only Beethoven sonatas. I doubt if any of the great pianists of to-day could now awaken as much public interest by such programs as Von Bülow did. I remember the concert at which, among others of the Beethoven sonatas, this virtuoso played Opus 106 ("Grosse Sonata für das Hammerklavier"). After he had played through part of the first movement he became restless, and from time to time peered over the keyboard and into the instrument as if something were wrong with it. Finally he broke off in the middle of the movement, rose from his seat and walked off the stage. When he reappeared, he had with him an attendant from the firm of manufacturers whose pianofortes he used, and together they fussed over the instrument for a while, before the attendant made his exit and the irate little pianist began

the sonata all over again. We considered the mishap that gave us opportunity to hear him play so much of the work twice, a piece of great good luck for us. Would we so consider it now?

Von Bülow has passed into musical history as a great Beethoven player, and such he undoubtedly was. I doubt, however, if he was a greater Beethoven player than several living pianists. Some seasons ago Eugène d'Albert played a Beethoven program. His performance did not evoke the enthusiasm he anticipated. In fact there were intimations in the comments on his performance that he was not as great a Beethoven player as he thought he was. Personally, and having a very clear recollection of Von Bülow's Beethoven recitals, because I attended every one he gave in New York, and in my mind's eye can see him sitting at the pianoforte, bending away over, with his ear almost to the keyboard, I think d'Albert played his Beethoven program quite as well. What had happened, however, was this: A little matter of thirty years had passed and with it the classical period and its efflorescence, the sonata form, had faded by just so much, and by just so much no longer was considered by the public the crucial test of a pianist's musicianship. Incidentally it is worth noting that the public usually is far ahead of the profession and of the majority of critics in appreciating new tendencies in music and in realizing what is passing away; and the same thing probably prevails in other arts.

Orchestric Instead of Pianistic.

I am aware that Beethoven was a pianist of the first rank and that within the limitations of the sonata form he developed the capacity of the pianoforte. I also have read Richard Strauss's opinion, in his edition of Berlioz's work on instrumentation, that Beethoven treated the orchestra pianistically. Nevertheless, from the modern viewpoint the essential fault of the sonata, Beethoven's sonatas included, seems to me to be that it is too orchestral and not sufficiently *claviermässig* (pianistic) in character; not sufficiently adapted to the genius of the pianoforte as we know it to-day. It is possible that for the times in which they were composed, the sonatas of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven were most pianistic. But as music has become more and more an intimate phase of life, and as our most intimate instrument, the instrument of the household, is the pianoforte, we understand its capacity for the intimate expression of moods and fancies, the lights and shadows of life, as it never was understood before. The modern lover of music, if I may judge his standpoint from my own, feels that while the sonatas of the masters I have named were written for the pianoforte, they were thought out for orchestra, and that even a Beethoven sonata is an engraving for pianoforte of a symphony for orchestra. He composed nine symphonies and thirty-two sonatas. If he had written his nine symphonies for pianoforte, we would have had nine more sonatas. If he had composed his sonatas for orchestra, we would have had thirty-two more symphonies.

This orchestric (as opposed to pianistic) character of the Beethoven sonatas accounts for passages in them so awkwardly written for the instrument that they are difficult to master, and yet, when mastered, are not effective in proportion to their difficulty. Between enlarging the capacity of an instrument through the problems you give the player to solve and writing passages that are awkwardly conceived for it, and hence ineffectual after they have been mastered, there is a great difference. Chopin, Liszt and others pile Pelion on Ossa in their technical requirements of the pianist; but when he has surmounted them, he has climbed a mountain, and from its peak may watch the world at his feet. I think the orchestric character of much that Beethoven wrote for the pianoforte partly accounts for the fact that his sonatas no longer attract the great virtuosos as they formerly did and that the public no longer regards them as the final test of a pianist's rank.

I speak so unreservedly because I have lived through the change of taste myself. By way of personal explanation I may be permitted to say, that while I am not a professional musician, music was so much a part of my life that I studied the pianoforte almost as assiduously as if I had intended becoming a public player, and that I was proficient enough to meet once a week with the first violinist and the first violoncellist of the New York Philharmonic Society for the practice of chamber music. If there is any one who should worship at the shrine of the sonata form, and especially at that of the Beethoven sonatas, it should be myself, for I was brought up on the form and those sonatas were my daily bread. When I went to the

Von Bülow Beethoven recitals it was with book in hand, to follow what he played note for note for purposes of study and assimilation. Those were years when, in the hours during which one seeks communion with one's other self, the Beethoven sonatas were the medium of communication. But now—give me the men who emancipated themselves from a form that fettered the individuality of the pianoforte, Chopin, Liszt, Schumann, and the pianoforte scores of the Wagner music-dramas, which actually sound more pianistic than the sonatas of the classical period and in which it is a delight to plunge oneself and be borne along on a flood of free, exultant melody.

Nevertheless, the sonata has had a great part to play in the history and development of music and has played it nobly, and we must no more forget this than we should allow present-day hero worship to supplant the memory of the heroes who went before. The sonata is the firm and solid bridge over which music passed from the contrapuntal period to the romantic, and doubtless there still are some who prefer to linger on the bridge rather than cross it to the promised land to which it leads. Always there are conservatives who stand still and look back; and that these still should let their eyes rest longingly on the great master of the classical epoch, Beethoven, is, to say the least, comprehensible. One would have to be unresponsive indeed not to be thrilled by the story of his life—his force of character, his rugged personality, his determination in spite of one of the greatest misfortunes that could befall a musician, deafness; and the intellectual power which he displayed in bending a seemingly rigid art form to

his will and making it the receptacle of his inspiration.

Well may these considerations be borne in mind whenever a Beethoven sonata is on a pianoforte recital program. If it does not move us as profoundly as music more modern does, that is not because its composer was less deeply concerned with the problems of life than those who have come after him. For his time he was wonderfully "subjective," drawing his inspiration from the heart, yet always preserving a sane mental poise. If to-day the sonatas of this great genius and splendid man seem to us less dramatic and emotional than they once did to audiences, it is because of the progress of music toward greater plasticity of expression and our conviction that such should be its mission.

IV.

DAWN OF THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

ALL art begins with a groping after form, then attains form, and then emancipates itself from too great insistence upon rigidity of form without, however, reverting to its early formless condition. It was absolutely necessary to the establishment of music as an art that at some period or periods in its development it should "pull itself together" and focus itself in certain forms, and adhere to them somewhat rigidly and somewhat tenaciously until they had been perfected.

Without saying so in as many words, I have sought, in speaking of the sonata, to let the modern lover of music know that if he does not like sonatas he need not be ashamed of that fact. A few minutes ago and before writing this sentence, I left my desk and going to the pianoforte, played through Beethoven's "Sonata Pathétique." It used to be a thrilling experience to play it or to hear it played. To-day the Grave which introduces the first movement still seemed portentous, the individual themes throughout the work had lost none of their beauty. And yet the effect produced in earlier years by this sonata as a whole was lacking. I shall not say that it sounded pedantic, for I dislike to apply that word to anything that sprang from the heart

and brain of a genius like Beethoven's, but there was a feeling of restraint about it—the restraint of set form, the restraint of pathos patterned to measure, which is incompatible with our modern notions of absolute freedom of expression in music. Moreover, there is ample evidence that Beethoven himself chafed under the restraint of the sonata form and constantly strove to make it more elastic and more yielding to his inspiration.

What a Sonata Is.

The sonata form (that is to say, the movement from which the sonata derives its name) consists of three main divisions and can easily be studied by securing the Bülow and Lebert edition of the Beethoven sonatas in Schirmer's library, in which the various divisions and subdivisions are indicated as they occur in the music. The first division (sometimes with a slow introduction like the Grave of the "Sonata Pathétique") may be called the exposition. It consists of the main theme in the key of the piece, a connecting episode, a second theme in a related key and contrasting with the first, and a concluding passage. As a rule the exposition is repeated—an extremely artificial proceeding, since there is no esthetic or psychological reason for it.

After the exposition comes the second division, the development or "working out," a treatment of both themes with much figuration and imitation, generally called the "free fantasia" and consisting "chiefly of a free development of motives taken from the first part" (Baker). This leads into the third division, which is

a restatement of the first, excepting that the second theme, instead of being in a related key, is, like the main theme, in the tonic.

How Beethoven Enlarged the Form.

This is the form of the sonata movement which was handed down to Beethoven by Haydn and Mozart. It very soon became apparent that the greatest genius of the classical period found it too limited for his inspiration. In his third sonata (Opus 2, No. 3) he makes several innovations that, for their day, are most daring. Following the first episode after the main theme, he introduces a second episode with which he leads into the second theme. Then using a variant of the first episode as a connection he leads over to a third, a closing theme. In fact, the material of the second episode is so thematic that I see no reason why he should not be said to use four themes in the exposition instead of the customary two. In the free fantasia he insistently reiterates the main theme, practically ignoring the others, thus familiarizing the listener with it and making it as welcome as an old friend when the third division ushers it in again.

Instead of closing the movement at the end of the usual third division, as his predecessors, Haydn and Mozart, did, Beethoven introduces what is one of the most important innovations grafted by him upon the sonata form—a coda with a cadenza. I can imagine that this movement made his contemporaries look dubious and shake their heads. It must have seemed to them originality strained to the point of eccentricity

and more bizarre than effective. As we look back upon it, after this long lapse of time, it must be reckoned a most brilliant achievement in the direction of freer form, and from this point of view—please bear in mind the reservation—its creator not only never surpassed it, but frequently fell behind it.

One of the movements of this sonata is a scherzo. Beethoven is the creator of this style of movement. It is much less formal than the minuet which Haydn introduced into the sonata. This especial scherzo has a trio which in the broad sweep of its arpeggios is as modern sounding as anything Beethoven wrote for the pianoforte.

His "Moonlight Sonata."

There are other sonatas by Beethoven that indicate efforts on his part to be less trammeled by considerations of form. Regard as an example the "Sonata Quasi Una Fantasia," Opus 27, No. 2, generally, and by no means inaptly, called the "Moonlight Sonata." This begins with the broad and beautiful slow movement, with its sustained melody, a poem of profound pathos in musical accents. It is followed by a Scherzo—*"une fleur entre deux abîmes"* (a flower 'twixt two abysses) Liszt called it; and then comes the concluding movement, a Presto agitato, which is one of Beethoven's most impassioned creations. There are only three movements, and the usual sequence is inverted, for the last of the three is the Sonata movement. At the end of the Adagio sostenuto and at the end of the Allegretto as well, is the direction *"attacca subito il sequente,"* in-

dicating that the following movement is to be attacked at once and denoting an inner relationship, a psychological connection between the three movements. Throughout the work the themes are of extraordinary beauty and expressiveness even for a Beethoven and the whole is a genuine drama of human life and experience. This impression is produced not only by the very evident psychological connection between the movements, but by the manner in which the composer holds on to his themes, developing them through bar after bar as if he himself appreciated their beauty and were reluctant to let go of them and introduce new material. The entire first movement, practically a song without words of the most exquisite poignancy, is built on a single motive with a brief episode which is more like an improvisation than a set part of a movement; while the last movement consists of four eloquent themes with only the merest suggestion of connecting episodes. The working out in the last movement is almost wholly a persistent iteration of the second theme. This persistent dwelling upon theme and the psychological relation between the different movements make this "Moonlight Sonata" to me the most modern sounding of Beethoven's pianoforte works, although when mere structural greatness is considered, most critics will incline to rank it lower than the "Sonata Appassionata" and the four last sonatas, Op. 106 and 109-11. Undoubtedly, however, it is the most "temperamental" of his sonatas—and herein again the most modern. My one quarrel with Von Bülow is that he made it so popular by his frequent playing of it and his exceptionally poetic interpreta-

tion of it, that the great virtuosos shun it, very much as they shun the sixth Chopin waltz (Mme. Dudevant's dog chasing its own tail), because it is played by every pianoforte pupil of every girls' boarding school everywhere.

Striving for Freedom.

In addition to what I have said of this sonata, it was an immense gain for greater freedom of form, and it is to be regretted that it is a more or less isolated instance and that Beethoven did not adopt it as a standard in shaping his remaining sonatas. Its most valuable attribute from the modern point of view is a characteristic to which I already have called attention several times—the fact that its several movements stand in psychological relation to one another; that there is such real soul or temperamental connection between them, that it would be doing actual violence to the work as a whole if any one movement were to be played without the others or if their sequence were to be inverted.

But, you may ask, is there not in all sonatas this psychological inter-relationship of the several movements? Have we not been told again and again that there is?

Undoubtedly you, and others who have been misinformed by enthusiasts who are unable to hear music in anything that has been composed since Beethoven, have been told so. But the sonata, with a few exceptions like the "Moonlight," simply is a group usually of four movements, three long ones with a shorter one between, and, save for their being in related keys, there is no temperamental relationship between the move-

ments whatsoever, and to talk of there being such a thing is nonsense. I believe the time will come when virtuosos will not hesitate to lift single movements out of the Beethoven sonatas and place them on their programs and that there will be a sigh of relief from the public because it can hear a movement that still sounds fresh and modern without being obliged to listen to two or three others that do not. Heresy? Maybe. Galileo was accounted a heretic—yet the world moves and the musical world with it.

The Beethoven Periods.

Beethoven was an intellectual as well as a musical giant. He thought before he wrought. The division of his activity into three periods, in each of which he is supposed to have progressed further along the road of originality and greatness, is generally accepted. Nevertheless, it is an arbitrary one, especially as regards the pianoforte sonatas, since it has been seen that the first movement of one of his earliest works, the third sonata (Opus 2, No. 3), is one of his most original contributions to music, and one of the most strikingly developed movements in sonata form that he has given us. The period division which assigns this sonata as well as the "Sonata Pathètique" to the first period is absurd. The fact is, that the works of the so-called first and second periods overlap; but there is a decided change in his style when we come to his third period which, in the pianoforte sonatas, begins with Opus 109. (The beginning of this period usually is assigned to the sonata

Opus 101, which seems to me too early.) Because here a restless spirit seems to be brooding over his work, it is thought by some that his mind and heart were warped by his misfortunes—his deafness, the ingratitude of a worthless nephew to whom he had been as a father, and other family and material troubles. To me, however, Beethoven seems in these sonatas to be chafing more and more under the restraint of form and to be struggling to free himself from it, bending all his intellect to the task. Frankly, I do not think that in these last sonatas he achieved his purpose. He had outgrown the form he himself had perfected, and the thoughts which toward the last he endeavored to mould in it called for absolutely free and untrammeled development. He had become too great for it and, as a result, it cramped and hampered him in his latest utterances. It is my firm belief that had Beethoven come upon the scene fifty years later, he would not have composed a single sonata, but have revived the suite in modern style, as Schumann practically did in his "Carnaval," "Kreisleriana," and "Faschingschwank aus Wien," or have created for the pianoforte something corresponding to the freely developed tone poems of Richard Strauss.

Because, however, Beethoven wrote thirty-two pianoforte sonatas and because he was for many years the all-dominating figure in the musical world, every great composer who came after him and composed for the pianoforte experimented with the sonata form, and always, be it noted, with less success and less importance to the real progress of music toward freedom of expression than when he followed his own inner im-

pulse and wrote the mood pieces, the "music of intention," the subjective expressions of indicated thoughts and feelings, that were more consonant with the tendencies of the romantic period which followed Beethoven and for which he may be said to have paved the way. For just as Bach brought the contrapuntal form to such perfection that those who came after him could not even begin where he left off, let alone surpass him, so Beethoven brought the sonata form to such perfection that no further advance in it was possible. No wonder therefore that the pianoforte sonatas of the romanticists are comparatively few in number and the least satisfactory of their works. These composers seem to have written sonatas simply to show that they could write them and under a mistaken idea that length is a measure of greatness and that shorter pieces are minor achievements, whereas as much genius can be displayed in a nocturne as in a sonata.

Sonatas Now Old-fashioned.

Lawrence Gilman, one of our younger American critics, in his "Phases of Modern Music," a collection of essays, brief but containing a wealth of suggestion and breathing throughout the spirit of modernity, sums up the matter in speaking of Edward MacDowell's "Keltic Sonata": "I cannot help wishing that he might contrive some expedient for doing away, so far as he himself is concerned, with the sonata form which he occasionally uses, rather inconsistently, as a vehicle for the expression of that vision and emotion that are in him; for, generally speaking, and in spite of

the triumphant success of the 'Keltic,' Mr. MacDowell is less fortunate in his sonatas than in those freer and more elastically wrought tone poems in which he voices a mood or an experience with epigrammatic concision and directness. The 'Keltic' succeeds in spite of its form, * * * though even here, and notwithstanding the freedom of manipulation, one feels that he would have worked to still finer ends in a more flexible and fluent form. He is never so compelling, so persuasively eloquent, as in those impressionistically conceived pieces in which he moulds his inspiration upon the events of an interior emotional program, rather than upon a musical formula necessarily arbitrary and anomalous." This applies to pianoforte music in general since Beethoven. Such I believe to be the consensus of opinion among the younger generation of critics, to whom, after all, the future belongs, as well as the opinion of those older critics who refuse to allow themselves to be pitchforked by their years into the ranks of the old fogies and who still hold themselves ever receptive to every new manifestation in music that is based on a union of mind and heart.

Unless otherwise specifically mentioned I have, in speaking of the sonata form, referred to it in connection with the pianoforte. But it also is the form employed for the symphony (which simply is a sonata for orchestra); for pianoforte trios, quartets and quintets; for string quartets and other branches of chamber music (which are sonatas written for the combination of instruments mentioned and such others as are employed in chamber music), and for concertos (which are sonatas for the combination of a

solo instrument like the pianoforte, violin or violoncello, with orchestra). In these branches the sonata form has held its own more successfully than on the pianoforte, and for several extraneous reasons. In the symphony it is due largely to the greater variety that can be achieved through orchestral coloring; in chamber music largely to the somewhat super-refined and timorous taste of its devotees which would regard any startling innovation as highly indecorous; and in the concerto to the fact that a soloist who appears at an orchestral concert is supposed to play a concerto simply because the orchestra is there to play it with him, although he, as well as the audience, probably would find a group of solos far more effective. In fact I think that much of the applause which usually follows a great pianist's playing of a concerto is due not so much to the audience's enthusiasm over it as to the hope that he may be induced to come out and play something alone. So far as the symphony is concerned, it is liberating itself more and more from the sonata form and taking the direction indicated by Liszt in his symphonic poems and by Richard Strauss in his tone poems, the freest form of orchestral composition yet conceived.

The First Romantic Composers.

In music, as in other arts, periods overlap. We have seen that during Bach's life Scarlatti in Italy was laying the foundations of the harmonic system and shaping the outlines of the sonata form which was to develop through Philipp Emanuel Bach, Haydn and Mozart and find its greatest master in Beethoven. Likewise,

even while Beethoven was creating those works which are the glory of the classical period, two of his contemporaries, Carl Maria von Weber, who died one year before him, and Franz Schubert, who survived him by only a year, were writing music which was destined to turn the art into new channels. Weber (1786-1826) is indeed regarded as the founder of the romantic school through his opera "Der Freischütz." It seems to me, however, that Schubert (1797-1828) contributed quite as much to the new movement through his songs, while the contributions of both to the pianoforte are important. Weber was a finished pianist, had an enormous reach (he could stretch a twelfth), and besides utilizing the facility thus afforded him to add to the brilliancy of pianoforte technique (as in his well-known "Concert Piece for Piano and Orchestra"), he deliberately, in some of his compositions, ignored the sonata form and wrote a "Momento Capriccioso," a "Polonaise," a "Rondo Brilliant," a "Polacca Brilliant" and the fascinating "Invitation to the Dance." The last, even in its original form and without the elaborations in Tausig's version of it, and the "Concert Piece" still are brilliant and effective numbers in the modern pianoforte repertoire. Considering the age in which they were composed, their freedom from pedantry is little short of marvelous.

Schubert's Pianoforte Music.

Schubert was not a virtuoso and passed his life almost in obscurity, but we now recognize that, although he lived but thirty-one years, few composers wrought

more lastingly than he. Of course, the proper place for an estimate of his genius is in the chapter on song, but as a pianoforte composer he is, even to this day, making his influence more and more felt. Living in Vienna, Beethoven's city, and a fervent admirer of that genius, it was natural that he should have composed sonatas, and there is a whole volume of them among his pianoforte works. Nevertheless, so original was his genius and so fertile, that, in addition to his numerous other works, he composed eight impromptus, among them the highly poetic one in G flat major (Opus 42, No. 2), usually called "The Elegy"; another in B flat major (Opus 142, No. 3), which is a theme with variations, some of them brilliant, others profoundly expressive; and the beautifully melodious one in A flat major; six dainty "Moments Musicals"; the exquisite little waltz melodies from which Liszt fashioned the "Soirées de Vienne"; the "Fantasia in G," from which the popular minuet is taken; and the broadly dramatic "Fantasia" on a theme from his song, "The Wanderer," for which Liszt wrote an orchestral obbligato, thus converting it into a highly effective and thoroughly modern fantasy for pianoforte and orchestra. These detached compositions are as eloquent in their appeal to-day as if they had been written during the last ten years instead of during the first quarter of the last century. They are melodious with the sustained melody that delights the modern ear. There is not, as in the sonata form or, for that matter, in all the classical music that Schubert heard around him, the brief giving out of a theme, then an episode, then another brief theme and so on, all couched in the formulas in which the classicists de-

lighted, but instead of these postulates of formality, melody fully developed and wrought out by one who reveled in it and was willing that his hearers should revel in it as well. To distinguish between the classicists and this early romantic composer, whose work survives in all its freshness and beauty to this day, it may be said that their music was thematic—based on the kind of themes that lent themselves to formal working out as prescribed by the sonata formula; whereas these detached pieces of Schubert are based on melodies—long-drawn-out melodies, if you wish, and be grateful that they are—that conjure up mood pictures and through their exquisite harmonization exhale the very fragrance of romanticism.

Naturally, the sonatas from his pen are more set. Nevertheless, so long as it seems that we must have sonatas on our recital programs, the neglect of those by Schubert is shameful. I am willing to stake his sonata No. 5, in A minor, against any sonata ever written, and from several of the sonatas single movements can be detached which I should think any pianist would be glad to add to his repertoire. Among these is the lithesome scherzo from the sonata No. 10, in B flat major, and the beautiful slow movement (Andante sostenuto) from the same work.

Schubert also wrote many valuable pianoforte duets, among them several sets of marches and polonaises and an elaborate and stirring "Divertissement à l'Hongroise," which last seems to foreshadow the "Hungarian Rhapsodies" of Liszt. In these and the detached pianoforte solo pieces a special value lies in that they do not appear to have been

composed as a protest against the sonata form, but spontaneously and without a thought on Schubert's part that he was doing anything in any way remarkable. They are expressions of musical feeling in the manner that appealed to him as most natural. The "Moments Musicals" especially are little mood pieces and impressionistic sketches with here and there a bit of realism. Who, for example, is apt to forget Essipoff's playing of the third "Moment" in Hungarian style, with a long crescendo and diminuendo (the same effect used by Rubinstein when he played his arrangement of the "Turkish March" from Beethoven's "Ruins of Athens"), so that it seemed as if a band of gypsies approached from afar, danced by, and vanished in the distance? Thoroughly modern is Schubert, a most modern of the moderns, whether we listen to his original pianoforte compositions, or to the Schubert-Liszt waltzes, or "Hark, Hark, the Lark," "To Be Sung on the Water" (barcarolle) and other songs of his which have been arranged for the pianoforte by Liszt.

Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words."

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, the musical idol of his day and now correspondingly neglected, contributed to the romantic movement his "Songs Without Words," short pieces for the pianoforte and aptly named because their sustained melody clearly defined against a purposely subordinated accompaniment gives them the character of songs, in the popular meaning of the word. Mendelssohn was a fluent, gentlemanly composer, whose music was readily understood and therefore at-

tained immediate popularity. But the very qualities that made it popular—its smoothness and polish and its rather commonplace harmlessness—have caused it to lose caste. The "Songs Without Words," however, still occupy a place in the music master's curriculum, forming a graceful and easily crossed bridge from classical to romantic music. I can remember still, when, as a lad, I received from my music teacher my first Mendelssohn "Song Without Words," the G minor barcarolle, how it seemed to open up a new world of music to me. Many of these compositions, which are unique in their way, still will be found to possess much merit. That they are polished little pieces and poetic in feeling almost goes without saying. The "Spring Song" may be one of the most hackneyed of pianoforte pieces and the same may be true of the "Spinning Song," but it is equally true that the former is as graceful and charming as the latter is brilliant and showy. A tender and expressive little lyric is the one in F major(No. 22), which Joseffy frequently used as an encore and played with exquisite effect. A group of Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words" is never out of place on a pianist's program. At least half a dozen of them, I think, are apt to survive the vicissitudes of many years to come. Mendelssohn wrote three sonatas, a "Sonata Ecossaies" (Scotch), several capriccios and other pieces for the pianoforte, besides two pianoforte concertos, of which the one in G minor is the stock selection of conservatory pupils at their graduation exercises and later at their début. With it they shoot the musical chutes.

V

CHOPIN, THE POET OF THE PIANOFORTE

I MUST ask the reader still to imagine that he is at a pianoforte recital, although I frankly admit that I have been guilty of many digressions, so that it must appear to him as if he had been whisked from Mendelssohn Hall up to Carnegie Hall, then down to the Metropolitan Opera House and back to Mendelssohn Hall again. This, however, as I have sought to make clear before, is due to the universality of the pianoforte as an instrument and to the comprehensiveness of pianoforte music, which in itself illustrates in great part the development of the art.

At this point, then, of our imaginary pianoforte recital there is likely to be a group of compositions by Chopin; and the larger the group, or the more groups by this composer on the program, the better satisfied the audience is apt to be. Baker calls Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849) the "incomparable composer for the pianoforte." But he was more. He was an incomparable composer from every point of view, great, unique, a tone poet, as well as the first composer who searched the very soul of the instrument for which he specialized. Extraordinary as is his significance for that instrument, his influence extends through it into other realms of music, and his art is making itself felt to

this day in orchestra, opera and music-drama as well as in pianoforte music. For he was an innovator in form, an intrepid adventurer in harmony and a sublime singer of melody.

Tempo Rubato.

Before the pianist whose recital we are supposed to be attending will have played many bars of the first piece in the Chopin group, the individuality of this composer will become apparent. Melody will pervade the recital hall like the fragrance of flowers. At the same time there will be an iridescence not noticeable in any of the music that preceded Chopin, and produced as if by cascades of jewels—those remarkable ornamental notes which yet are not ornamental, but, in spite of all their light and shade, and their play of changeable colors, part of the great undercurrent of melody itself. Here we have then, nearly at the very outset of the first Chopin piece, the famous *tempo rubato,* so-called, which has been explained in various ways, but which with Chopin really means that while the rhythm goes calmly on with one hand, the other weaves a veil of iridescent notes around the melodic idea. Liszt expressed it exactly when he said: "You see that tree? Its leaves move to and fro in the wind and follow the gentle motion of the air; but its trunk stands there immovable in its form." Or the *tempo rubato* is like a shower of petals from a tree in full bloom; the firm outline of the tree, its foliage are there, while we see the delicately tinted blossoms falling from the branches and filling the air with color and fragrance; or like the myriad shafts from the facets of a

jewel, piercing in all directions while the jewel itself remains immovable, the centre of its own rays; or like the crisp ripple on a river, while the stream itself flows on in majesty; or, in one or two passages when Chopin becomes a cynic, like the twaddle of critics while the person they criticise calmly goes about his mission.

The Soul of the Pianoforte.

What you will notice about these compositions of Chopin—and I say "these compositions" deliberately, although I have not named any (for it makes no difference what pieces of his are on the program, the effect will be the same)—is the fact that in none of them is there the slightest suggestion of anything but pianoforte music. Chopin's great achievement so far as the pianoforte is concerned is the fact that he liberated it completely from orchestral and choral influences, and made it an instrument sufficient unto itself, brought it into its own in all its beauty of tone and expression and enlarged its capacity; sought out its soul and reproduced it in tone, as no other composer had done before him or has done since. The recognition of the true piano tone seems to have been instinctive with him. It appears in his earliest works. Nothing he ever wrote suggests orchestra or voice. For the beautiful singing quality he brings out in much of his music is a singing quality which belongs to the noble instrument to which he devoted himself. Not once while listening to a Chopin composition do you think to yourself, as you do so often with classical works, like the Beethoven sonatas, "How well this would sound on the orches-

tra!" Yet Chopin is as sonorous, as passionate, as pleading, as melancholy and as rich in effect, although he is played only on the black and white keys of the pianoforte, as if he were given forth by a hundred instrumentalists, so thoroughly did he understand the instrument for which he wrote. He was the Wagner of the pianoforte.

A Clear Melodic Line.

What you will notice, too, about his music is the general distinctness of his melody. There may be times, as in some of his arabesque compositions, like the "F Minor Étude," when the effect is slightly blurred. But this is done purposely, and as a rule there will be found a clear melodic line running through everything he wrote. Combined with this melody are weird, exquisite, entrancing harmonies, and those showers of *tempo rubato* notes which glitter like a veil of mist in the sunlight and yet, although a veil, allow you to see what is beneath it, like a delicate fabric which seems rather to emphasize and reveal the very things it is intended to conceal.

Chopin was a Pole. He had the melancholy of his race, but also its *verve*. Profoundly affected by his country's sorrow, he also had its haughty spirit. In Paris, where he spent the most significant years of his life, he was surrounded by the aristocracy of his own country who were in exile, and by the aristocracy of the arts. Liszt speaks of an evening at his salon where he met, besides some of the Polish aristocrats, people like Heinrich Heine, Meyerbeer, Delacroix, Nourrit,

the tenor, and Bellini. Chopin admired Bellini's music, its clear and beautiful melodiousness, and I myself think that Chopin's melody often has Italian characteristics, although it is combined with harmony that is German in its seriousness, but wholly Chopinesque in all its essentials. In those numerous groups of ornamental, or rather semi-ornamental, notes, so many of them chromatic, and all of them usually designated by the technical term "passing notes," signifying that they are merely incidental to the melody and to the harmonic structure, there are nevertheless many that have far greater importance than if they were merely "passing." It is in bringing out this significance by slight accelerations and retards, by allowing a few of them to flash out here while the others remain slightly veiled, that the inspired Chopin player shows his true conception of what the composer meant by *tempo rubato.*

It was Liszt, afterward the first to recognize Wagner, who was the first to recognize Chopin. It was Liszt also who introduced him to George Sand (Mme. Dudevant), the great passion of his life. Chopin was the friend of many women. They adored his poetic nature, and there is much in his music that is effeminate, delicate and sensitive; but altogether too much has been made of this side of his art, and of certain morbid pieces like some of the Nocturnes. The affair with George Sand was not only a passion, but was a tragedy, and like all such tragedies it left on his music the imprint of something deeper and greater than mere delicacy and morbidity. Then, too, we have to count with his patriotism and his sympathy with his strug-

giing country, and there is much more of the virile and heroic in his music than either the average virtuoso or the average listener allows for.

The Études.

These contrasts in his music can readily be recognized when a great pianist makes up the Chopin group on his program from the Études, which are among the greatest compositions of all times, whether we consider them as pianoforte music or as music in general. They touch the soul in many places, and in many and varied ways, and they reflect the alternate delicacy and daintiness of his genius as well as its vigor and nobility. Suppose, for the sake of a brilliant beginning, the virtuoso chooses to start off with the fifth, the so-called "Étude on Black Keys," and flashes it in our eyes, making the pianoforte play the part of a mirror held in the sunlight. This gives us one side of Chopin's music, its brilliancy; and it is noticeable that while the tempo of the piece is given as *vivace,* the style in which it is to be played is indicated by the direction *brillante.*

If the pianist continues with the third Étude, we shall hear one of the most tender and beautiful melodies that Chopin ever composed. Let him follow this with number thirteen, the one in A flat major, and we are reminded of what Schumann said, in his review of this book of Études, in which he speaks of the A flat major as "an æolian harp, possessed of all the musical scales, the hand of the artist causing them all to intermingle in many varieties of fantastic embellishment,

yet in such a way as to leave everywhere audible a deep fundamental tone and a soft continuously singing upper voice."

Schumann heard Chopin himself play this Étude, and he says that whoever will play it in the way described will get the correct idea of Chopin's performance. "But it would be an error to think that Chopin permitted every one of the small notes to be distinctly heard. It was rather an undulation of the A flat major chord here and there thrown aloft anew by the pedal. Throughout all the harmonies one always heard in great tones a wondrous melody, while once only in the middle of the piece, besides that chief song, a tenor voice became prominent in the midst of the chords. After the Étude, a feeling came over one as of having seen in a dream a beatific picture which, when half awake, one would gladly recall."

Vigor, Passion, and Impetus.

If now the pianist wishes to show by contrast Chopin in his full vigor, passionate and impetuous, let him take the great C Minor Étude, the twelfth, *Allegro con fuoco.* "Great in outline, pride, force and velocity, it never relaxes its grim grip from the first shrill dissonance to the overwhelming chordal close," says Huneker, adding that "this end rings out like the crack of creation." It is supposed to be an expression of the alternating wrath and despair with which Chopin received the tidings of the taking of Warsaw by the Russians in September, 1831, for it was shortly after this that the Étude was composed. No wonder, to

quote again from Huneker, that "all sweeps along in tornadic passion."

A pianist hardly can go amiss in making his selection from the twenty-seven Études, for the contrasts which he can effect are obvious, and there is among these compositions not one which has not its special merits. There is the tenth, of which Von Bülow said whoever could play it in a really finished manner might congratulate himself on having climbed to the highest point of the pianist's Parnassus, and that the whole repertory of music for the pianoforte does not contain a study of perpetual motion so full of genius and fancy as this especial one is universally acknowledged to be, excepting, possibly, Liszt's "Feux Follets." Then there is number nineteen in C sharp minor, like a nocturne with the melody in the left hand, with the right hand answering as a flute would a 'cello. For contrast take number twenty-one, the so-called "Butterfly Étude"—a wretched misnomer, because a pianist gifted with true musical clairvoyance can work up such a gust of passion in this Étude that any butterfly would be swept away as if by a hurricane. Nor, in order to accomplish this, is it necessary to make such a bravura piece of the Étude as so many pianists ignorantly do. We have, too, the "Winter Wind Étude," in A minor, Opus 25, number eleven—the twenty-third in the collection as usually published—planned on a grand scale and carried out in a manner equal to the plan.

Von Bülow calls attention to the fact that, with all its sonorousness, "the greatest fullness of sound imaginable," it nowhere trespasses upon the domain of

the orchestra, but remains pianoforte music in the strictest sense of the word. "To Chopin," says Von Bülow, in referring to this Étude, "is due the honor and credit of having set fast the boundary between piano and orchestral music which, through other composers of the romantic school, especially Robert Schumann, has been defaced and blotted out, to the prejudice and damage of both species." While agreeing with Von Bülow that Chopin was the great liberator of the pianoforte, I cannot agree with the exception he takes to the music of Robert Schumann. If he had referred back to the unpianistic classical sonata form, he would have been more accurate.

The Préludes.

I have gone into some detail regarding these Études because I regard them, as a whole, among the greatest of Chopin's works. But I once heard Rubinstein play the entire set of twenty-four Préludes, and I sometimes wonder, as one often does with the compositions of a great genius, whether these Préludes, in spite of their comparative brevity, should not be ranked as high as anything Chopin ever wrote. According to tradition, they were composed during the winter of 1838, which Chopin spent with George Sand at Majorca in the Balearic Islands. But there is authority for saying that they received only the finishing touches there, and are in fact the gleanings of his portfolios.

It seems as if in these twenty-four pieces every phase of human emotion were brought out. If my memory is correct, Rubinstein played them as a solo group at

a Philharmonic concert, or he may have given them about the same time at one of his recitals. It was in 1872; and while after this long lapse of time it is impossible to remember every detail of his performance, I shall never forget the exquisite tenderness with which he played the very brief Prélude in A major, the seventh. He simply caressed the keyboard, touched it as if his fingers were tipped with velvet; and though into the other compositions of the series he put, according as their character varied, an immense amount of passion, or more subdued emotion, I can still hear this seventh Prélude sounding in my memory, note for note and bar for bar, as he rendered it—a prolonged, tremulous whisper. Schumann regarded the Préludes as most remarkable, saying that "in every piece we find in his own hand 'Frédéric Chopin wrote it.' One recognizes him in his pauses, in his quick-coming breath. He is the boldest, the proudest poet-soul of his time."

Each number in the series is complete in itself, a mood picture; but the series as a whole, in its collection of moods, its panorama of emotions, represents the entire range of Chopin's art. The fourth in E minor, covering only a page, is one of the most pathetic plaints ever penned. The fifteenth in D flat major, with its continual reiteration of the dominant, like the incessant drip of rain on a roof, is a nocturne—Chopin in one of his morbid moments; while the eighteenth in F minor is as bold a piece of dramatic recitative as though it had been lifted bodily out of a music-drama. And so we might run the whole range of the collection, finding each admirable in itself, yet different from

all the others. What a group for a recital these twenty-four Préludes make!

Nocturnes.

If Chopin had not written the Nocturnes I doubt if those who play and those who comment on him would err so often in attributing such an excess of morbidness to him as they do, or lay the charge of effeminacy against him. Morbid these Nocturnes undoubtedly are in many parts, and yet they often rise to the dignity of elegy, and sometimes even of tragedy. Exquisitely melodious they are, too, and full of the haunting mystery of night. The one in C sharp minor, Opus 27, No. 1, is perhaps the most dramatic of the series, and Henry T. Finck, in his Chopin essay, is entirely within bounds when he says that it embodies a greater variety of emotion and more genuine dramatic spirit on four pages than many operas on four hundred. There are greater nocturnes than the one in G, Opus 37, No. 2, but I must nevertheless regard it as the most beautiful of all. It may bewitch and unman the player, as Niecks has said, but, on the other hand, I think its second melody, like a Venetian barcarolle breathed through the moonlight, is the most exquisite thing Chopin ever composed; and note how, without any undulating accompaniment, its rhythm nevertheless produces a gentle wavy effect.

Probably the most familiar of all the Nocturnes is the one in E flat, the second in the first set, Opus 9. It has been played so much that unless it is interpreted in a perfect manner it comes perilously near to being hackneyed; but under the hands of a great pianist, who

unites with absolute independence of all his ten fingers, the soul of a poet, it becomes an iridescent play of color, with a sombre picture of melancholy seen through the iridescence. Remenyi played a violin arrangement of it with such delicacy and so much poetry of feeling that he actually reconciled one to its transfer from the pianoforte to the soprano instrument of four strings.

Chopin and Poe.

John Field, an Irish composer (1782-1837), was the first to compose nocturnes, and it is not unlikely that Chopin got the pattern from him. Occasionally at historical recitals one hears a nocturne by John Field; but I think that if even those who love to question the originality of great men were familiar with the nocturnes of Field, they would realize how far Chopin went beyond him, making out of a small type an art form of such poetic content that, in spite of Field having been first in the lists, Chopin may be said to have originated the form. Naturally, Field did not relish seeing himself supplanted by this greater genius, and he said of Chopin that he composed music for a sick-room, and had "a talent of the hospital." On recital programs Chopin's nocturnes often appear, and, when played by a master like Paderewski, who is sensitive to every shade of Chopin's genius, they are heard with an exquisite feeling of sorrow. In these Nocturnes, Chopin always seems to me like Edgar Allan Poe in "Ullalume" or in "Annabel Lee"—and was not Poe one of the only two American poets of real genius?

Waltzes and Mazurkas.

A Chopin waltz will admirably afford contrast in a group of Chopin pieces on a recital program. Possibly the waltzes are the most frequently played by amateurs of all Chopin's compositions. But, to perpetrate an Irish bull, even those that have been played to death still are very much alive. It was Schumann who said that if these waltzes were to be played for dancing more than half the dancers should be Countesses, the music is so aristocratic. Indeed, to listen to these waltzes is like looking at a dance through a fairy lens. They seem to be improvisations of the pianist during a dance, and to reflect the thoughts that arise in the player's mind as he looks on, giving out the rhythm with the left hand, while the melody and the ornamental note-groups indicate his fancies—love, a jealous plaint, joy, ecstasy, and the tender whispering of enamored couples as they glide past. The slow A minor "Waltz," with its viola-like left-hand melody, was Chopin's favorite, and he was so pleased when Stephen Heller told him that it was his favorite one, too, that he invited him to luncheon. (Strange that we always should regard food as the most appropriate reward of artistic sympathy!) Each waltz, with the exception of some of the posthumous ones, has its individual charm, but to me the most beautiful is the one in C sharp minor, with its infinite expression of longing in its leading theme and its remarkable chromatic descent before the brilliant right-hand passage that follows in the second episode. These chromatics should be emphasized, as they are a feature of the

passage and form gems of harmonization. But few pianists seem to appreciate their significance and pay sole attention to bringing out the upper voice.

Thoroughly characteristic of Chopin, thoroughly in keeping with his Polish nationality and its traditions, are the Mazurkas—jewels of music, full of the finest feeling, the most delicate harmonization, and with a dash and spirit entirely their own. Weitzmann truly says that they are the most faithful and animated pictures of his nation which Chopin has left us, and that they are masterpieces of their class: "Here he stands forth in his full originality as the head of the romantic school of music; in them his novel and alluring melodic and harmonic progressions are even more surprising than in his larger compositions."

Liszt on the Mazurkas.

Liszt, too, pauses to pay his tribute to them: "Some portray foolhardy gaiety in the sultry and oppressive air of a ball, and on the eve of a battle; one hears the low sighs of parting, whose sobs are stifled by sharp rhythms of the dance. Others portray the grief of the sorely anxious soul amid festivities, whose tumult is unable to drown the profound woe of the heart. Others, again, show the tears, premonitions and struggles of a broken heart, devoured by jealousy, sorrowing over its loss, but repressing the curse. Now we are surrounded by a swirling frenzy, pierced by an ever-recurring palpitating melody like the anxious beating of a loving but rejected heart; and anon distant trumpet calls resound like dim memories of bygone fame."

All this is very fine, although a trifle over-sentimental. The fact is that the Chopin Mazurkas are archly coquettish, passionately pleading, full of delicate banter, love, despair and conquest—and always thoroughly original and thoroughly interesting. In fact Chopin never is commonplace. A Mazurka or two will add zest to any group of his works on a recital program.

The Polonaises are Chopin's battle-hymns. The roll of drums, the booming of cannon, the rattle of musketry and the plaint for the dead—all these things one may hear in some of these compositions. The mourning notes, however, are missing from the "A Major Polonaise," Opus 40, and usually called "Le Militaire." It is not a large canvas, but it is heroic and one of the most virile of all his works. It was of this polonaise Chopin said that if he could play it as it should be played, he would break all the strings of the pianoforte before he had finished.

Other Works.

And then the Ballades and the Scherzos. These are perhaps Chopin's greatest contributions to the music of the pianoforte. They are wonderfully original, wonderfully emotional, yet never to the point of morbidness, full of his original harmonies, fascinating rhythms and glow. In the Scherzos he is not gaily abandoned, as the title would suggest, but often grim and mocking—tragedy mocking itself.

Chopin also wrote Sonatas—felt himself obliged to, perhaps, because he was writing for the pianoforte, because pianoforte music still was in the grip of the thir-

ty-two Beethoven pianoforte sonatas. By no means did he adhere to the classical form; yet these three sonatas are not to be counted among his most successful compositions. One of them, the B flat minor, contains the familiar funeral march which has been said to "give forth the pain and grief of an entire nation"—Chopin's nation, sorrowing Poland; and, indeed, the middle episode, the trio of the march, is pathetic to the verge of tears, while in the other portions the march progresses to the grave amid the tolling of bells and the heavy tramp of soldiery. It is played and played, possibly played too much; and yet, when well played, never misses leaving a deep impression. Because people will persist in "playing" certain popular pieces, there is no reason these should not be enjoyed when interpreted by a master. There is a vast difference between interpretation and mere "playing."

This funeral march is followed in the sonata by a finale which aptly enough has been described as night winds sweeping over graves. The funeral march often is played at recitals as a detached piece. I cannot see why pianists do not add this finale, which has real psychological connection with it. The "Berceuse," a "Barcarolle," two "Concertos for Piano and Orchestra," which often are slightingly spoken of, and most unjustly, since they are full of beautiful melody and most grateful to play—beyond these it does not seem necessary to go here, unless, perhaps, to mention the Impromptus, which are full of the most delightful *chiaroscuro,* and the great F minor "Fantaisie."

A Noble from Head to Foot.

Because Chopin wrote only for the pianoforte, because as a rule his pieces are not long, his greatness was not at first recognized. The conservatives seemed to think no man could be great unless he wrote sonatas in four movements for the piano and symphonies for the orchestra, unless he composed for fifty or sixty instruments instead of for only one. But although Jumbo was large, he was not accounted beautiful, and worship of the big is a mistaken kind of reverence. Chopin's briefest mazurka is worth infinitely more than many sonatas that cover many pages. This composer was a tone poet of the highest order. While to-day we regard him mainly as the interpreter of beauty, in his own day he was an innovator, a reformer and, like his own Poles, a revolutionist. The pianoforte—the pianoforte as a solo instrument—sufficed for his most beautiful dreams, for his most passionate longings. Bie, in his "History of the Pianoforte and Pianoforte Players," tells us that Chopin smiled when he heard that Czerny had composed another overture for eight pianos and sixteen persons, and was very happy over it. "Chopin," adds Bie, "opened to the two hands a wider world than Czerny could give to thirty-two."

Rubinstein, as quoted by Huneker, apostrophizes him as "the piano bard, the piano rhapsodist, the piano mind, the piano soul. * * * Tragic, romantic, virile, heroic, dramatic, fantastic, soulful, sweet, dreamy, brilliant, grand, simple—all possible expressions are found in his compositions and all are sung by him upon his instrument." Huneker him-

self says: "In Chopin's music there are many pianists, many styles, and all are correct if they are poetically musical, logical and individually sincere." Best of all, he enlarged the scope for individual expression in music. Once for all, he got pianoforte music away from the set form of the classical sonata. "He was sincere, and his survival when nearly all of Mendelssohn, much of Schumann, and half of Berlioz have suffered an eclipse, is proof positive of his vitality." —Thus again Huneker. Bie says, in summing up his position, that his greatness is his aristocracy; that "he stands among musicians, in his faultless vesture, a noble from head to foot." But, above all, he is a searcher of the human soul, and, because he searched it out on the pianoforte, is he therefore less great than if he had drawn it out on the strings, piped it on the reeds, blown it through the tubes and battered it on the drumheads of the orchestra?

VI

SCHUMANN, THE "INTIMATE"

HAVING finished with his Chopin group, the pianist is apt to follow it with his Schumann selections, and we meet with another original musical genius. Robert Schumann was born at Zwickau in June, 1810. His father was a book publisher and was in hopes that the son would show literary aptitude. In fact, the elder Schumann discouraged Robert's musical aspirations; and as a result, instead of receiving early in life a systematic musical training, his education was along other lines. He studied law at Leipzig in 1828 and in Heidelberg in 1829, and was thus what is rare among musicians—a composer with an academic education.

His meeting with the celebrated pianoforte teacher, Frederick Wieck, the Leschetitzki of his day, determined Schumann to enter upon a musical career. Wieck took him into his home in Leipzig and he studied the pianoforte with a view of becoming a virtuoso. In order to gain greater freedom in fingering, he devised a mechanical apparatus by which one finger was suspended in a sling while the others played upon the keyboard. Unfortunately, through the use of this contrivance he strained the tendons of one hand and his dream of a virtuoso's career vanished. Meanwhile he

had fallen in love with his teacher's daughter, Clara Wieck, and finally, after determined opposition on the part of her father, married her in 1840. Later in life a brain trouble from which he had suffered intermittently became more severe, and in February, 1854, he became possessed of the idea that Schubert's spirit had appeared to him and given him a theme to work out. He abruptly left the room in which he was sitting with some friends in his house at Düsseldorf and threw himself into the Rhine. Some boatmen rescued him from drowning, but he had to be taken to an asylum near Bonn, where he died in July, 1856.

These circumstances in his life are mentioned here not only because of their interest, but because they explain some aspects of his music. Schumann was of a brooding disposition, intensely introspective. Compared with Chopin, his music lacks iridescence and shows a want of brilliancy. This will be immediately apparent if at a recital a pianist places the Schumann pieces after a Chopin group, as he is apt to do for the sake of the very contrast which they afford. But if Schumann's compositions are wanting in superficially attractive brightness, they more than make up for it in their profounder characteristics. All through them one seems to hear a deep-sounding tone. One might say that his works for the keyboard instrument are pianoforte music for the viola, and for that reason they appear to me so expressive and so appealing. The harmonies are wonderfully compact. One feels after striking a Schumann chord like stiffening the fingers in order to hold it down more firmly, keep a grip on it, and let it sound to its last echo.

Poet, Bourgeois, and Philosopher.

In Schumann's music the sensitive listener will find a curious blending of poet, bourgeois, and philosopher. He had the higher fancy, the warmth of the poet, a bourgeois love of what was intimate and homely, and the introspection of the philosopher. Sometimes he is so introspective that he appears to me actually to be burrowing in harmony like a mole. The melodies are interwoven; sometimes the upper voice flutters lightly down upon "contrapuntal collisions in the bass"; frequently his rhythms are syncopated; melodies are superimposed upon each other; he uses "imitations," canonic figuration, and often by introducing a single note foreign to the scale, suddenly lowers or lifts an entire passage. There are interior voices in his music, half suppressed, yet making themselves heard now and then above the principal melody. He loves "anticipations"—advancing a single note or a few notes of the harmony and then filling in the sustained tone or tones with what was at first lacking. These characteristics are so marked that it is as easy to recognize Schumann as it is to distinguish Chopin in the first few bars of a work by either. Each is *sui generis,* each has his own hallmark, and it is a great thing in music, as in other arts, to have one's product so personal that there can be no mistaking whose it is.

Schumann made valuable contributions to so-called program music. His pieces, besides intrinsic musical worth, have a distinct meaning, usually indicated by the titles he gives them. And these titles themselves often are suggested by the works of authors whom he ad-

mired, or hark back to certain fanciful figures like harlequins and columbines. His second work for the pianoforte, "The Papillons," derived its inspiration from the poet, Jean Paul, who was at that time an object of his intense worship. But whoever expects to find butterflies fluttering through these Schumann pieces will be mistaken. They are rather symbols of thoughts still in the chrysalis state and waiting, like butterflies, to cast off the shell and gain air and freedom. This symbolism must be borne in mind in listening to "The Papillons."

Schumann himself said, in a general way, regarding his programmatic intentions in this and other works, that the titles given to his music should be taken very much like the titles of poems, and that, as in the case of poems, the music in itself should be beautiful, irrespective of title or printed explanation. This is true of all program music that has survived. It will be found beautiful in itself; but it also is easy to discover that the titles and explanations which are calculated to place the hearer in certain receptive moods vastly add to his enjoyment.

"Carnaval" and "Kreisleriana."

I am always glad when a pianist elects to place the Schumann "Carnaval" on his program, because it is so characteristic of the composer's method of work and of his writing short pieces *en suite,* giving a separate name to each of his diversions yet uniting them into one composition by means of a comprehensive title. The complete title to this work is "Carnaval Scènes

Mignonnes sur Quatre Notes pour Piano, Op. 9." The four notes are A S C H, and in explanation it should be said that in German S (es) is E flat, and H the B of our musical scale. Asch was the birthplace of Ernestine von Fricken, one of Schumann's early loves. Three of the divisions of the "Carnaval" are entitled Florestan, Eusebius, and March of the Davidsbündler. Schumann had founded the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik," and he contributed to it under the noms-de-plume of Florestan, Eusebius and Raro; while his associates were denominated the Davidsbündler, it being their mission to combat and put to flight the old fogies of music, as David had the Philistines. Schumann himself is the looker-on at this carnival, a thinker wandering through the gay whirl, drawing his own conclusions, and noting down in music the varied figures as they pass, and his reflections on them. We meet Chopin and Paganini, each neatly characterized; Chiarina (the Italian diminutive of Clara) and Estrella (none other than Ernestine herself); also Harlequin, Pantalon, and Columbine. The Davidsbündler march in to the strains of the German folk-song,

"Grandfather wedded my grandmother dear,
So grandfather then was a bridegroom, I fear,"

and the whole ends in a merry uproar. He wrote another carnival suite, Opus 26, the "Faschingschwank aus Wien," in which he introduced a suggestion of the "Marseillaise," which was at that time forbidden to be played in Vienna.

The title of another work which ranks among his

finest productions, the "Kreisleriana," also requires explanation. This he derived from a book by E. T. A. Hoffmann, who sometimes is spoken of as the German Poe, although he lacks the exquisite art of the American author—in fact, is a Poe bound up in much heavy German philosophy and turgid introspection. The *Kreisler* of Hoffmann's book is an exuberant sentimentalist, and is said to have had his prototype in Kapellmeister Ludwig Böhner, who, after a brilliant early career, had become addicted to drink and was reduced to maudlin memories of his former triumphs. In Hoffmann's book there is a contrast drawn between this pathetic character, whose ideals have become shadows which he vainly chases, and the prosaic views of life as set forth by another character *Kater Murr* (literally *Tomcat Purr*). But these "Kreisleriana," of which Bie says "the joys and sorrows expressed in these pieces were never put into form with more sovereign power," should be entitled "Schumanniana," for although the title is derived from Hoffmann, the content is Schumann.

Thoughts of His Clara.

Concerning the work as a whole he wrote to Clara while in the throes of composition: "This music now in me, and always such beautiful melodies! Think of it, since my last letter to you I have another entire book of new things ready. I intend to call them 'Kreisleriana,' and in them you and a thought of you play the chief rôle, and I shall dedicate them to you. Yes, they belong to you as to no one else, and how sweetly

you will smile when you find yourself in them! My music seems to me so wonderfully interwoven, in spite of all its simplicity, and speaking right from the heart. It has that effect upon all for whom I play these things, as I now do gladly and often." If Clara and a thought of Clara play the chief rôle, what becomes of *Kreisler* and *Kater Murr?* Surely "Kreisleriana" are Schumanniana.

Full of varied characteristics are the "Fantasie Pieces." Among these is the familiar "Warum," which one has but to hear to recognize at once that it is no ordinary Why, but a question upon the answer to which depends the happiness of a lifetime; "At Evening" (*Abends*), with its sense of perfect peace; the buoyant "Soaring" (*Aufschwung*); "Whims" (*Grillen*); "Night Scene," an echo of the legend of Hero and Leander; the fable, "Dream-Whirls" (*Traumeswirren*) and the "End of the Song," with its mingling of humor and sadness. These "Fantasie Pieces" and the aptly named "Novelettes" seem destined always to retain their popularity. And then there are the "Scenes from Childhood," to which belongs the "Traümerei"; the "Forest Scenes," the "Sonatas;" the heroic technical studies, based on the Paganini "Capriccios," and the "Études Symphoniques," and the "Fantasie," above the first movement of which he placed these lines from Schlegel:

"Through every tone there passes,
To him who deigns to list,
In varied earthly dreaming,
A tone of gentleness."

Clara was the "tone," as he told her. It was largely through Madame Schumann's public playing of her husband's works that they won their way. Even so, owing to their lack of brilliancy and their introspection, they were long in coming to their own. But the best of them, including, of course, the admirable "A Minor Concerto," long will retain their hold on the modern pianist's repertoire. William Mason went to Leipzig in 1849. "Only a few years before I arrived at Leipzig," he says in his "Memories," "Schumann's genius was so little appreciated that when he entered the store of Breitkopf & Härtel with a new manuscript under his arm, the clerks would nudge one another and laugh. One of them told me that they regarded him as a crank and a failure because his pieces remained on the shelf and were in the way. * * * Shortly after my return from Germany (to New York) I went to Breusing's, then one of the principal music stores in the city,—the Schirmers are his successors,—and asking for certain compositions by Schumann, I was informed that they had his music in stock, but as there was no demand for it, it was packed away in a bundle, and kept in the basement." What a contrast now!

VII

LISZT, THE GIANT AMONG VIRTUOSOS

IT is possible, but not likely, that some pianist willing, for the moment at least, to sacrifice outward success to inward satisfaction, will, after he has played the Schumann selections on his program, essay one of Brahms's shorter pianoforte compositions. These are even more introspective than Schumann's works and combine a wealth of learning with great depth of musical feeling. It is almost necessary, however, that one should know them thoroughly in order to appreciate them, and audiences have been so slow to welcome them that they appear but infrequently on recital programs. Those of my readers, however, who are pianists yet still unacquainted with these rare and beautiful compositions, will soon find themselves under the spell of their intimate personal expression if they will get them and start to learn them. The Brahms Variations on a theme by Händel make a stupendous work, and the rare occasions on which it is played by any one capable of mastering it should be regarded as "events."

Grieg, with his clear, fascinating Norwegian clang-tints, which also play through his fascinating "Concerta" in A minor; Dvorak, the Bohemian; Tschaikowsky, whose first "Concerto" in B flat minor

is among the finest modern works of its kind; or some of the neo-Russians, are composers who may figure on the program of a modern pianoforte recital. But it is more likely that the virtuoso will here elect to bring his recital to a close with some work by the grandest figure in the history of pianoforte playing and one of the greatest in the history of composition—Franz Liszt.

Kissed by Beethoven.

Liszt was born at Raiding, near Odenburg in Hungary, in October, 1811, and he died in Bayreuth in July, 1886. From early boyhood, when he was a pianoforte prodigy, almost until his death, he occupied a unique position in the musical world. He was the Paganini of the pianoforte, the greatest pianist that ever lived, and he was a great composer; and although, as a virtuoso, he retired from public performances long before he died, his fame as a player and his still greater fame as a composer have not diminished and his influence still is potent.

His father was an amateur, and began giving him instruction when he was six years old. The boy's talent was so pronounced that even without professional instruction he was able, when he was nine years old, to appear in public and play a difficult concerto by Ries. So great was his success that his father arranged for other concerts at Pressburg. After the second of these, several Hungarian noblemen agreed to provide an annual stipend of 600 florins for six years for Franz's further musical education. The family then removed to Vienna, where, for about a year and a half, the boy

took pianoforte lessons from Czerny and theory with Salieri. Beethoven heard of him, and asked to see him, and at their meeting, after Franz had played, without notes and without the other instruments, Beethoven's pianoforte trio, Op. 97 (the large one in B flat major), the great master embraced and kissed him. In 1823 he was taken to Paris with a view to being placed in the Conservatoire. But although he passed his examination without difficulty, Cherubini, at that time the director of the institution and prejudiced against infant phenomena, revived a rule excluding foreigners and admission was denied him.

His success as a pianist, however, was enormous and there was the greatest demand in salons and musical circles for "le petit Litz." (As some writer, whose name I cannot recall, has said, "the nearest Paris came to appreciating Liszt was to call him 'Litz.'") He was the friend of Chopin, of other musicians, and of painters and literary men, and the doors of the most exclusive drawing-rooms of the French capital were open to him. Paganini played in Paris in 1831, and his wonderful feats of technique inspired Liszt to efforts to develop the technique of the pianoforte with as much daring as Paganini had shown in developing the capacity of the violin. This was the beginning of those wonderful feats of virtuosity as well as of the remarkable technical demands made in his compositions, both of which combined have done so much to make the pianoforte what it is, and to bring out its full potentiality as regards execution and expression.

Episode with Countess D'Agoult.

For a time Liszt left Paris with the Countess d'Agoult, who wrote under the nom-de-plume of Daniel Stern, and who was the mother of his three children, of whom Cosima became the wife, first of Von Bülow and then of Wagner. His four years with the Countess he passed in Geneva. Twice, however, he came forth from this retirement to cross the sword of virtuosity with and vanquish his only serious rival in pianoforte playing, Sigismund Thalberg, a brilliant player and a man, like Liszt himself, of fascinating personality, but lacking the Hungarian's intellectual capacity. In 1829, he and Countess d'Agoult having separated, he began his triumphal progress through Europe, and for the following ten years the world rang with his fame. He then settled down as Court Conductor at Weimar, which became the headquarters of the new romantic movement in Germany. Hardly a person of distinction in music or any of the other arts passed through the town without a visit to the Altenburg, to pay his respects to Liszt. At Weimar, "Lohengrin" had its first performance; here Berlioz's works found a hearing; here everything new in music that also was meritorious was made welcome. Liszt's activity at Weimar continued until 1859, when he left there on account of the hostility displayed to the production of Cornelius's opera, "The Barber of Bagdad," and its resultant failure. He remained away from Weimar for eleven years, living for the most part in Rome, until 1870, when he was invited to conduct the Beethoven festival and re-established cordial relations with the Court.

Thereafter he divided his year between Rome, Buda-Pest, where he had been made President of the new Hungarian Academy of Music, and Weimar.

"Liszt, the artist and the man," says Baker, in his "Biographical Dictionary of Musicians," "is one of the grand figures in the history of music. Generous, kindly and liberal-minded, whole-souled in his devotion to art, superbly equipped as an interpreter of classic and romantic works alike, a composer of original conceptions and daring execution, a conductor of marvellous insight, worshipped as teacher and friend by a host of disciples, reverenced and admired by his fellow-musicians, honored by institutions of learning and by potentates as no artist before or since, his influence, spread by those whom he personally taught and swayed, will probably increase rather than diminish as time goes on."

It has been said that Liszt passed through six lives in the course of his existence—only three less than a cat. As "petit Litz" he was the precocious child adored of Paris; as a youth, he plunged into the early romanticism which united the devotees of various branches of art in the French capital; next came the episode with the Countess d'Agoult; then his triumphal tours through Europe; settling at Weimar, he became the centre of the modern musical movement in Europe; finally, he revolved in a cycle through Rome, Buda-Pest and Weimar, followed from place to place by a band of devotees.

Liszt's compositions for the pianoforte may be classified as follows: "Fantasies Dramatiques"; "Années de Pelerinage"; "Harmonies Poetiques et Religieuses";

the Sonata, Concertos, Études, and miscellaneous works; "Rhapsodies Hongroises"; arrangements and transcriptions from Berlioz, Beethoven, Weber, Paganini, Schubert and others.

The Don Juan Fantasie.

Among the "Fantasies Dramatiques," which are variations on themes from operas, not mere potpourris or transcriptions, but genuine fantasies, and usually based on one or two themes only, the best known is the "Don Juan Fantasie." It is founded upon the duet, "La ci darem la mano." Liszt utilizes a passage from the overture as an introduction, then gives the entire duet, varying it, however, not in set form, but with the effect of a brilliant fantasia, and then winds up the whole with a presto on the "Champagne Song." It is true it no longer is Mozart—but Mozart might be glad if it were. It is even possible that the time will come when "Don Giovanni" will have vanished from the operatic stage, yet be remembered by this brilliant fantasia of Liszt's. It is one of the great *tours de force* of pianoforte music, and it is good music as well. Another of the better known "Fantasies Dramatiques" is the one Liszt made from "Norma," in which occurs a long sustained trill and a melody for the right hand, while the left plays another melody and the accompaniment to the whole. In other words, there is in this passage a trill sustained throughout, two melodies and the accompaniment, all going on at the same time, yet written with such perfect knowledge of pianoforte tech-

nique that any virtuoso worthy of the name as used in a modern sense, can compass it.

A work called the "Hexameron" is included in catalogues of Liszt's compositions, although he only contributed part of it. It is the march from Bellini's "Puritani" with six variations, written by six pianists and originally played by them on six pianofortes, five of them full grands, while Chopin, whose variation was not of the bravura kind, sat at a two-stringed semi-grand. Liszt contributed the introduction, the connecting links and the finale of the "Hexameron."

The "Années de Pelerinage" were published in three divisions, extending in point of time from 1835 to 1883. They are a series of musical impressions, as the titles indicate—"Au lac de Wallenstadt, Pastoral," "Au bord d'une source, Sposalizio" (after Raphael's picture in the Brera), "Il Penseroso" (after Michael Angelo). Many of these are adroit and elegant in the treatment of the pianoforte, and at the same time beautiful as music. The "Harmonies" are partly transcriptions of his own vocal pieces, partly musical illustrations to poems. Among them is the familiar "Cantique d'Amour," and the "Benediction de Dieu dans la solitude," of which he himself was very fond. William Mason says that at the Altenburg a copy of it always was lying on the pianoforte, "which Liszt had used so many times when playing for his guests that it became associated with memories of Berlioz, Rubinstein, Vieuxtemps, Wieniawski, Joachim." When Mr. Mason left Weimar he took this copy with him as a souvenir, still has it, and treasures it all the more for the marks of usage which it bears. The "Conso-

lations," which, as Edward Dannreuther says, may be taken as corollaries to the "Harmonies," are tenderly expressive pianoforte pieces.

Giant Strides in Virtuosity.

The Études bear the dates 1827, 1839 and 1852, and as they are in the main progressive editions of the same pieces, they represent the history of pianoforte technique as it developed under Liszt's own fingers. In their earliest shape when issued in 1827, they were but little different from the classical Études of Czerny and Cramer. In their latest shape they form the extreme of virtuosity. Indeed, these three editions are three giant strides in the development of pianoforte technique. Von Bülow's coupling of the Étude called "Feux Follets" with the A flat study (No. 10) of Chopin already has been quoted under that composer. He considered it even more difficult. Schumann called the collection "Sturm und Graus Etuden" (Studies of Storm and Dread), and expressed the opinion that there were only ten or twelve pianists living who could play them. In the Étude called "Waldesrauschen" will be found some ingenious double counterpoint. The theme is divided into two portions, a descending and ascending one, which later on appear together, with first one and then the other uppermost. Other titles among the Études are "Paysage," "Mazeppa" (a tremendous test of endurance), "Vision," "Chasse-neige," "Harmonies de Sor" and "Gnomentanz." Through Liszt's transcriptions of some of the Paganini pieces in the form of Études, which include the famous "Bell Rondo" from

one of the Paganini concertos, this piece, for example, now is far better known as a pianoforte composition than in its original form for violin.

Sonata, Concertos and Rhapsodies.

The "Sonata in B Minor" dedicated to Schumann is one of the few sonatas in which there is psychological unity throughout. This is due to the fact that it is one movement; although by employing various themes both in rapid and in slow time, Liszt has given it a certain aspect of division into movements. It might well serve as a model to younger composers who think they have to write sonatas. Dannreuther, it is true, says of it that it is "a curious compound of true genius and empty rhetoric," but admits that it contains enough of genuine impulse and originality in the themes of the opening section, and of suave calm in the melody of the section that stands for the slow movement, to secure the hearer's attention. Mr. Hanchett's characterization of it as one of the most masterly compositions ever put into this form—a gigantic, wholly admirable and original work—is more just.

The two pianoforte concertos (in E flat and A major) are superb works. Not only are they written with all the skill which Liszt knew so well how to apply when composing for the instrument, but with this technical perfection they also unite thought and feeling. Like the sonata, they show throughout their development the psychological unity which is so essentially modern. What the pianoforte owes to Chopin and Liszt can be summed up by saying that they were

poets and thinkers who took the trouble to thoroughly understand the instrument. Because their music sounds so well on it, at least one of them, Liszt, frequently is stigmatized as a trickster of virtuosity and a charlatan, as if there were some wonderful mark of genius in writing something for one instrument that sounds better on another or may not sound as well as it ought to on any. If Liszt's pianoforte music is grateful to the player and equally grateful to the listener, it is not only because he knew how to write for the pianoforte, but because, with deep thoughts and poetic feelings, he also understood how to express them clearly and pianistically.

The "Rhapsodies Hongroises" are of such dazzling brilliancy and show off a pianist's technique to such good purpose and so brilliantly, that their real musical worth has been under-estimated. They are full of splendid fire, vitality and passion, and their rhythmic throb is simply irresistible. Like the Études, their history is curious. At first they were merely short transcriptions of Hungarian tunes. These were elaborated and republished and canceled, and then rewritten and published again. In all there are fifteen pieces in the set, ending with the "Rakoczy March." As "Ungarische Melodien" they began to appear in 1838; as "Melodies Hongroises" in 1846; as "Rhapsodies Hongroises" in 1854. Consider that they are over fifty years old, yet remain the greatest pieces for the display of brilliant technique and the most grateful works for which a pianist can ask, and that at the same time they are full of admirable musical content! Because they happen to be brilliant and effective they are called

trashy, whereas they owe their brilliancy and effectiveness to Liszt's own transcendent virtuosity, to his knowledge of the pianoforte. In order to be great must music be "classic," heavy and dull, and badly written for the instrument on which it is to be played?

How Liszt Played.

In those charming reminiscences from which I already have had occasion to quote several times, William Mason's "Memories of a Musical Life," Mr. Mason says that time and again at Weimar he heard Liszt play, and that there is absolutely no doubt in his mind that Liszt was the greatest pianist of the nineteenth century, what the Germans call an *Erscheinung*, an epoch-making genius. Tausig said of him: "Liszt dwells alone upon a solitary mountain-top and none of us can approach him." Rubinstein said to Mr. William Steinway, in the year 1873 (I quote from Mason): "Put all the rest of us together and we would not make one Liszt." While Mr. Mason willingly acknowledges that there have been other great pianists, some of them now living, he adds: "But I must dissent from those writers who affirm that any of these can be placed upon a level with Liszt. Those who make this assertion are too young to have heard Liszt other than in his declining years, and it is unjust to compare the playing of one who has long since passed his prime with that of one who is still in it."

Edward Dannreuther, who heard Liszt play from 1863 onward, says that there was about his playing an air of improvisation and the expression of a grand and

fine personality, perfect self-possession, grace, dignity and never-failing fire; that his tone was large and penetrating, but not hard, every effect being produced naturally and easily. Dannreuther adds that he has heard performances, it may be of the same pieces, by younger men, such as Rubinstein and Tausig, but that they left an impression as of Liszt at second-hand or of Liszt past his prime. "None of his contemporaries or pupils were so spontaneous, individual and convincing in their playing; and none except Tausig so infallible with their fingers and wrists."

Liszt himself paid this superb tribute to the pianoforte as an instrument: "To me my pianoforte is what to the seaman is his boat, to the Arab his horse; nay, more, it has been till now my eye, my speech, my life. Its strings have vibrated under my passions and its yielding keys have obeyed my every caprice. It may be that the secret tie which binds me to it so closely is a delusion, but I hold the pianoforte very high. In my view, it takes the first place in the hierarchy of instruments. It is the oftenest used and the widest spread. In the circumference of its seven octaves it embraces the whole range of an orchestra, and a man's ten fingers are enough to render the harmonies which in an orchestra are brought out only by the combination of hundreds of musicians. The pianoforte has on the one side the capacity of assimilation, the capacity of taking unto itself the life of all instruments; on the other hand it has its own life, its own growth, its own individual development. My highest ambition is to leave to the piano players to come after me, some useful instructions, the footprints of advanced attain-

ment, something which may some day provide a worthy witness of the labor and study of my youth."

Bear in mind that Liszt played for Beethoven, that he was a contemporary of Chopin and Schumann, that he was one of the first to throw himself heart and soul into the Wagner movement, and that death came to him while he was attending the festival performances at Bayreuth; bear in mind, I repeat, that he played for Beethoven and died at "Parsifal"; strive to appreciate the extremes of musical history and development implied by this; then remember that he remains a potent force in music—and you may be able to form some idea of his greatness.

VIII

WITH PADEREWSKI—A MODERN PIANIST ON TOUR

LISZT never was in this country, but we can gain some idea of the success that would have been his from the triumphs of Ignace Paderewski. Other famous pianists have come to this country—Thalberg in 1856; Rubinstein in 1872; Von Bülow, Joseffy, who took up his residence here; Rosenthal, Josef Hofmann. But Paderewski's success has been greater than any of these. Americans are said to be fickle; but although Paderewski no longer is a novelty, his name still is the one with which to fill a concert hall from floor to roof.

Why this is so is no secret. Hear him and you will understand the reason. To a technique which does not hesitate at anything and an industry that flinches at nothing—no one practices more assiduously than he—he adds the soul of a poet and the strength of an athlete. He looks slender and poetical enough as he sits at the piano on the concert stage; but if you watch him from near by you will be able to note the great physical power which he can bring into play when necessary—*and which he never brings into play unless it is necessary.* Therefore he combines poetry with force; and back of both is thought—intellectual capacity.

In a frame on the wall of a New York trust company

is a check for $171,981.89. It represents the net receipts of one virtuoso for one concert tour, and is believed to be the largest actual amount ever earned in this country by an artist, whether singer or player, in a single season. This check is drawn to the order of Ignace J. Paderewski.

An opinion regarding the piano by a man who by playing it can earn so large a sum, and earn it because he is the greatest living exponent of pianoforte playing, would seem worth having. Paderewski believes that, save in one respect, the pianoforte has reached perfection and is incapable of further improvement. He does not think that anything more should be done to add to its volume of tone. If anything, he considers this too great and the instrument too loud already. Instead of more power, rather less would be satisfactory. Wherein, however, he considers the instrument still lacking, notwithstanding its wonderful development during the last century, is in its capacity for sustained tone—for holding a long-drawn-out tone with the facility of the violin, for example. He is convinced, however, that the means of imparting this capacity for sustaining tone to the pianoforte will be discovered in due time and that the invention probably will be made in this country. That increased tone-sustaining power for the instrument is a great desideratum doubtless is the opinion of many experts; but that the greatest master of the pianoforte considers it perfect in other respects is highly interesting and significant. After all, it remains the greatest of all solo instruments, because, within the smallest compass and with the simplest means of control, it has the range of an orchestra. For

this reason it is the most popular of instruments and, in its manufacture, extends from the polished dry-goods box with internal organs of iron, wire and felt and with a glistening row of celluloid teeth ready to bite as soon as ever the lid is raised, to the highest-class concert grand.

The "Piano Doctor."

We who have our pianofortes in our own homes and are content with an occasional visit from the tuner, little dream of the care bestowed upon the instrument on which an artist like Paderewski plays. Instrument? I should have said instruments; for, when he is on tour, he has a whole suite of them, no less than four, and each is coddled as if it were a prima donna fresh from the hands of Madame Marchesi, instead of a thing of wood, metal and ivory. True, these pianos do not have their throats sprayed on the slightest possible occasion, but they are carefully protected against extremes of heat and cold, and, while the prima donna consults her physician only at intervals, a "piano doctor" is in constant attendance on these instruments.

Paderewski's "piano doctor" has traveled with him for several seasons, occupying the same private car and practically living with him during the entire tour. He was with him on the tour, in fact at his table at breakfast with him, when his special train was run on to an open siding near East Syracuse and left the track, Paderewski being thrown forward on his hands against the table and straining the muscles of one arm so severely that he was obliged to cancel his remaining

engagements. Up to that time, however, his net receipts from seventy-four concerts had been $137,012.50, while before this American tour began he gave thirty-six concerts in Australia with average receipts of $5,000. His record concert was at Dallas, Texas, some years ago, when the receipts were $9,000. It occurred during a Confederate reunion. While he was at the pianoforte, the various posts marched up to the hall with bands and fife-and-drum corps playing. Paderewski, however, kept right on through the blasts and shrilling. But when one of the posts let out the famous "rebel yell," the pianist leaped from his seat as if he expected a tiger to spring at his throat. Then he realized what had happened, smiled and continued amid laughter and applause. He had heard of the famous "rebel yell," but this was the first time he had heard it.

Pianofortes on Their Travels.

But to return to the pianofortes on tour. When Paderewski came to this country from Australia, his piano doctor met him at San Francisco with four instruments which had been selected with great care in New York and been shipped West in charge of the "doctor." One of these the virtuoso reserved for his private car, for he practices en route whenever there is a stop long enough to make it worth while. He rarely plays when the car is in motion. Of the other three instruments, the two he liked best were sent to his hotel, where during four days preceding his first concert, he practiced from seven to eight hours a day, notifying the "doctor" twenty-four hours in advance

which pianoforte he would use. This instrument became, officially, No. 1; the others No. 2 and No. 3.

The pianist's route took him from San Francisco to Oakland, San José, and Portland, Oregon. To make certain that he always will have a fine instrument to play on, a method of shipping ahead the instruments not in use is adopted. Thus, while he was playing on No. 1 in San Francisco and Oakland, No. 2 was sent on to San José and No. 3 to Portland. Of course, none but an expert could detect the slightest difference in these pianofortes, but a player like Paderewski is sensitive to the most delicately balanced distinctions or nuances in tone and action. One of his idiosyncrasies is that always before going on he asks the "doctor" which of the three instruments is on the stage, because, as he himself expresses it, "I don't want to meet a stranger." After each concert, at supper, this conversation invariably takes place:

Paderewski: "Well, 'Doctor,' it sounded all right to-night, didn't it?"

"Doctor": "Yes, sir."

Paderewski: "Well, then, please pass me the bread."

There never has been occasion to record what would happen if the "doctor" were to say, "No, sir." For he always has been able to answer in the affirmative, with the most scrupulous regard for veracity.

Paderewski is as careful to play his best in the least important place in which he gives a concert as he is in New York. This high sense of duty toward his public accounts in part for his supremacy among pianists. Paderewski is not a mere virtuoso. He is a man of fine intellectual gifts who plays the piano like a poet. Paul

Potter, the playwright, who lives in Geneva, Switzerland, and occasionally has dined there with Paderewski, tells me that he has conversed with the pianist on almost every conceivable subject *except music* and always found him remarkably well informed. His knowledge of the history of his native land, Poland, and of its literature is said to be quite wonderful. Chopin, also a Pole, he idolizes and regards as far and away the greatest composer for the piano. To the fund for the Chopin memorial at Warsaw he contributes by charging one dollar for his autograph, and two dollars for his signature and a few bars of music. From the money received as the proceeds of one season's autographs he was able to remit about $1,300 to the fund.

When the amusing little dialogue at the supper table, which I have recorded, takes place, the pianoforte which the virtuoso has used at his concert already will be on the way to its next destination. For it is part of the "doctor's" duty to see it safely out of the hall and onto the train before rejoining the party on the private car. The instrument is not boxed. The legs are removed and then a carefully fitted canvas is drawn over the body and held in place by straps. The body is slid out of the hall and slowly let down onto a specially constructed eight-wheel skid, swung low, so as to be as nearly as possible on a level with the platform. This skid is part of the outfit of the tour. The record time for detaching the legs of the pianoforte, covering the body, removing the instrument from the stage and having it on the skid ready to start for the station, is seven minutes.

"Thawing Out" a Pianoforte.

The instruments never are set up except under the "doctor's" personal supervision. Before each concert the pianoforte on which Paderewski is to play is carefully gone over and put in perfect condition—tuned and, if necessary, regulated, and this no matter how recently he may have used it. Defects so trifling that neither an ordinary player nor the public would notice them, would jar on the sensitive ear and nerves of the virtuoso. Sometimes the instrument has been exposed to such a low temperature that frost is found to have formed not only on the lid, but even on the iron plate inside. In such cases the pianoforte is set up and, after the film of frost has been scraped off, is allowed to thaw out slowly and naturally before it is touched for tuning or regulating.

There was an amusing incident in the handling of one of the Paderewski instruments at Columbus, Mississippi, where Paderewski played for seven hundred girls at the State College, although it was more exciting than diverting at the time it happened. The "doctor" relies on local help for getting the pianoforte from the skid to the stage and back again. Usually efficient helpers are obtainable, but at Columbus, where the college hall is upstairs and reached only by a narrow flight of steps, there was no aid to be had save from among the negroes lounging on the public square. The "doctor" went among them.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"Nawthin'."

"Want a job?"

"Naw, too busy," was the usual reply.

At last, however, a band of twenty "colored gentlemen" was secured in the hope that muscle and quantity would make up for lack of quality. But never before has a high-grade pianoforte been in such imminent peril. It was got upstairs well enough, in spite of the fact that the negroes walked all over each other. But the descent! The "doctor," Emil C. Fischer, stood at the top of the stairs directing; J. E. Francke, the treasurer of the tour, below. Around the latter fell a shower of fragments from the wall, the rail, the posts; and at one time it seemed as if the whole banister would give way and the pianoforte crash in splinters on the floor. There were other moments of suspense, for the pianoforte as well as for the two watchers, who drew a long breath when the instrument safely was on the skid.

Fortunately such untoward incidents are forgotten in the general atmosphere of good-humor which the pianist diffuses about him. He enjoys his little joke. During the last tour he handed a photograph of himself to Mr. Francke inscribed: "To the future Governor of Hoboken." At the Auditorium hotel, Chicago, Millward Adams' brother, about leaving on a trip, asked for an autograph. Paderewski, quick as a flash, wrote:

"For the brother of Mr. *Adams* on the *Eve* of his departure from Chicago."

Paderewski travels on a special train. With him usually are his wife, his manager, the treasurer of the tour, the piano "doctor," a secretary, valet and maid. His home is a villa on Lake Geneva, where he has a

beautiful garden and vinery, his dogs, his room for billiards, a game of which he is very fond, and unlimited opportunity for swimming, his favorite exercise. Apparently slender and surely most poet-looking at the piano, he is a man of iron strength as well as of iron will.

HOW TO APPRECIATE AN ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

IX

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORCHESTRA

THE appreciation and consequent enjoyment of an orchestral concert will be greatly enhanced if the listener is familiar with certain details regarding the orchestra itself and some of the compositions he is apt to hear. This I have borne in mind in the chapter divisions of this portion of my book, and, as a result, I have divided the subject into the general development of the orchestra, the specific consideration of the principal orchestral instruments, a cursory commentary on certain phases of orchestral music and a chapter on Richard Strauss who represents its most advanced aspects.

The first music of which we moderns take account was unaccompanied *(à capella)* singing for church service. It was composed in the old ecclesiastical modes, which are quite different from our modern scales, and the name which comes most prominently to mind in connection with this beginning of our musical history is that of Palestrina. With the influence of this old church choral music so dominant, there is little wonder that the first efforts to write music for instruments were awkward. It may be said right here that this awkwardness, or rather this lack of knowledge and appreciation of the individual capa-

city of various instruments, is shown throughout the school of contrapuntal composition, even by Bach. When Bach wrote for orchestral instruments he did not consider their peculiar tone quality, or their capacity for individual expression, but simply their pitch—which instrument could take up this, that or the other theme in his contrapuntal score, when he had carried it as high or as low as he could on some other instrument. This also is true of Händel, although in less degree.

But just as we have seen that Domenico Scarlatti worked along original lines for the pianoforte and created the germ of the sonata form, while Bach was weaving and plaiting the counterpoint of his suites, partitas and "Well-Tempered Clavichord," so in Italy, during a large part of this contrapuntal period, a distinct kind of orchestral music was springing up. Again, just as we have seen that in Italy the pianoforte shook off the trammels of counterpoint when it began to be used as an accompaniment for dramatic recitative in opera, so the instruments in the orchestra, when composers began to use them for operatic accompaniments, were employed more with reference to their individual tone qualities and power of expression.

Primitive Orchestral Efforts.

Although, strictly speaking, not the first composer to use orchestral instruments in opera, and to display skill in utilizing their individual characteristics, the most important of these early men was Claudio Monteverde (1568-1643). In his "Orpheo," which he pro-

duced in 1608, he utilized, besides two harpsichords (and it may be of interest to note here that instruments of the pianoforte class were long used in orchestras as connecting links between all the other instruments), two bass viols, two tenor viols, one double harp, two little French violins, two large guitars, two wood organs, two viola di gambas, one regal, four trombones, two cornets, one octave flute, one clarion, and three trumpets with mutes—a fairly formidable array of instruments when the period is considered. Of especial interest are the "two little French violins," which probably were the same as our modern violins, now the prima donnas of the orchestra and far outnumbering any other instrument employed.

It was Monteverde who in his "Tancredi e Clorinda" made use for the first time of a tremolo for stringed instruments, and it is said so to have astonished the performers that they at first refused to play it. Before Monteverde there were operatic composers like Jacopo Peri, and after him Cavalli and Alessandro Scarlatti, who did much for their day to develop the orchestra. This is a very brief summary of the early development of instrumental music, a story that easily could fill a volume—which, probably, however, very few people would take the trouble to read.

Beethoven and the Modern Orchestra.

The first really modern composer for the orchestra was Joseph Haydn (1732-1809), who also may be considered the father of the symphony. Born before Mozart, he also survived that composer. His music is gay and

naive; while Mozart, although he had decidedly greater genius for the dramatic than Haydn, nevertheless is only a trifle more emotional in his symphonies. The three greatest of these which he composed during the summer of 1788, the E flat major, G minor and C major (known as the "Jupiter"), show a decided advance in the knowledge of orchestration, and the E flat major is notable because it is the first symphonic work in which clarinets were used. Haydn's and Mozart's symphonies—that is, the best of them—sound agreeable even to-day in a concert hall of moderate size. But because modern music with its sonorous orchestra requires large auditoriums, like Carnegie Hall in New York, these charming symphonic works of the earlier classical period are swallowed up in space and much of their naive and pretty effect is lost.

Beethoven may be said to have established the modern orchestra. Very few instruments have been added to it since his time, and if an orchestra to-day sounds differently from what it did in his day, if the works of modern composers sound richer and more effective from a modern point of view than his orchestral compositions, it is not because we have added a lot of new instruments, but because our composers have acquired greater skill in bringing out their peculiar tone qualities and because the technique of orchestral players has greatly improved.

It is for precisely the same reasons that Beethoven's symphonies show such a great advance upon those of his predecessors. The point is not that Beethoven added a few more instruments to the orchestra, but that, so far as his own purposes were concerned, he

handled all the instruments which he included in his band with much greater skill than his predecessors had shown. Many writers affect to despise technique. But in point of fact the development of technique and the development of art go hand in hand. An artist, be he writer, painter or musician, cannot adequately express his ideas unless he has the means of doing so or the genius to create the means.

How He Developed Orchestral Resources.

In following Beethoven's symphonies from the First to the Ninth, we can see the modern orchestra developing under his hands from that handed over to him by Haydn and Mozart. In the First and Second Symphonies, Beethoven employs the usual strings, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets and tympani. In the Third Symphony, the "Eroica," he adds a third horn part; in the Fifth a piccolo, trombones and contrabassoon. Although employed in the finale only, these instruments here make their first bow in the symphonic orchestra. In the Ninth Symphony Beethoven introduced two additional horns, the first use of four horns in a symphony. The scoring of these symphonies is given somewhat more in detail in the chapter "How the Orchestra Grew," in Mr. W. J. Henderson's "The Orchestra and Orchestral Music," a well conceived and logically developed book, in which the full story of the orchestra and its growth is clearly and interestingly told.

Beethoven not only understood to a greater degree

than his predecessors the peculiar characteristics of orchestral instruments, he also compelled orchestral players to acquire a better technique by giving them more difficult music to execute. In point of greater difficulty in performance, a Beethoven symphony holds about the same relation to the symphonies of Mozart and Haydn as the Beethoven pianoforte sonatas do to the sonatas of those composers.

Beethoven and Wagner.

Just as Beethoven added only a few instruments to the orchestra of his predecessors, but showed greater skill in handling those instruments, so the modern musician—a Wagner or a Richard Strauss—achieves his striking instrumental effects by a still greater knowledge of instrumental resources. The Beethoven orchestra practically is the orchestra of to-day. Few, very few, instruments have been added. Modern composers steadily have asked for more and more instruments in each group; but that is quite a different thing from adding new instruments. They have required more instruments of the same kind, but have asked for very few instruments of new kinds. Let me illustrate this by two modern examples.

Firm, compact and eloquent as is Beethoven's orchestra in the Fifth Symphony, it cannot for a moment be compared in richness, sonority, tone color, searching power of expression and unflagging interest, with Wagner's orchestra in "Die Meistersinger." Yet Wagner has added only one trumpet, a harp and a tuba to the very orchestra which Beethoven employed when

he scored for the Fifth Symphony; while for his "Symphonie Pathètique," one of the finest of modern orchestral works, Tschaikowsky adds only a bass tuba to the orchestra used by Beethoven. The simple fact is that modern composers have studied every possible phase of tone color and expression of which each instrument is capable. Furthermore, by skillfully dividing the orchestra into groups and using these groups like separate orchestras, yet uniting them into one great orchestra, they produce wonderfully rich contrapuntal effects, and thus make the modern orchestra sound, not seventy-five years, but five hundred years more advanced than that of Beethoven, however great we gladly acknowledge Beethoven to have been.

Berlioz, an Orchestral Juggler.

Following Beethoven, the next great development in the handling of orchestral resources is due to Hector Berlioz (1803-1869), and it is curious here how nearly one musical epoch overlaps another. Scarlatti was composing sonatas, and thus voicing the beginning of the classical era, while Bach was bringing the contrapuntal period to a close. It was only five years after the completion of the Ninth Symphony that Berlioz's "Francs Juges" overture was played. A year later his "Symphonie Fantastique, Episode de la Vie d'un Artiste," was brought out. Yet the Berlioz orchestra sounds so utterly different from the Beethoven orchestra that it almost might be a collection of different instruments. Even more than Beethoven, Berlioz un-

derstood the individuality, the potential characteristics of each instrument.

Berlioz composed on a colossal scale, so colossal that his music has been called architectural. The "Dies Irae" in his "Requiem" calls for four brass bands, in four different corners of the hall, and for fourteen kettledrums tuned to different notes, in addition to the regular orchestra, chorus and soloists. This has been dubbed "three-story music"—the orchestra on the ground floor, the chorus on the *belle étage,* while the four extra brass bands are stationed *aux troisième.* Unfortunately for Berlioz, his ambition, in so far as it related to the art of orchestration and the skill he showed in accomplishing what he wanted to with his body of instrumentalists, was far in excess of his inspiration. His knowledge of the orchestra was sufficient to have afforded him every facility for the expression of great thoughts if he had them to express. But his power of thematic invention, his gift for melody, was not equal to his genius for instrumentation. Nevertheless, through this genius for instrumentation—for his technique was so extraordinary that it amounted to genius—and through his very striving after bizarre, unusual and gigantic effects, he contributed largely toward the development of the technical resources of instrumental music.

Wagner, Greatest of Orchestral Composers.

Berlioz wrote a book on instrumentation, which has lately been re-edited by Richard Strauss. In it Strauss, modestly ignoring himself, says that Wagner's scores

mark the only advance in orchestration worth mentioning since Berlioz. It is true, the technical possibilities of the orchestra were greatly improved, so far as the woodwind was concerned, by the introduction of keyed instruments constructed on the system invented by Theobald Böhm; while the French instrument maker, Adolphe Sax, also made important improvements by perfecting the bass clarinet and the bass tuba. But whatever aid Wagner derived from these improvements merely was incidental to the principle which is illustrated by every one of his scores—that technique merely is a means to an end. Wagner is the greatest orchestral virtuoso who ever breathed. Never, however, does he employ technique for technique's sake, but always only to enable his orchestra to convey the exact meaning he has in his mind or express the emotion he has in his heart, and he spares no pains to hit upon the best method of conveying these ideas and expressing these emotions. That is one reason why, although no one with any knowledge of music could mistake a passage by Wagner for any one else's music, each of his works has its own peculiar orchestral style. For each of his works reproduces through the orchestra the "atmosphere" of its subject. The scores of "Tannhäuser," "Lohengrin," "The Ring of the Nibelung," "Tristan," "Meistersinger" and "Parsifal" never could be mistaken for any one but Wagner's music. Yet how different they are from each other! He makes each instrument speak its own language. When, for example, the English horn speaks through Wagner, it speaks English, not broken English, and so it is with all the other instruments of the

orchestra—he makes them speak without a foreign accent.

If Wagner employs a large orchestra, it is not for the sake of making a noise, but in order to gain variety in expression. "He is wonderfully reserved in the use of his forces," says Richard Strauss. "He employs them as a great general would his battalions, and does not send in an army corps to pick off a skirmisher." Strauss regards "Lohengrin" as a model score for a somewhat advanced student, before proceeding to the polyphony of "Tristan" and "Meistersinger" or "the fairy region of the 'Nibelungs.'" "The handling of the wind instruments," writes Strauss, "reaches a hitherto unknown esthetic height. The so-called third woodwinds, English horn and bass clarinet, added for the first time to the woodwinds, are already employed in a variety of tone color; the voices of the second, third and fourth horn, trumpets and trombones established in an independent polyphony, the doubling of melodic voices characteristic of Wagner, carried out with such assurance and freedom and knowledge of their characteristic timbres, and worked out with an understanding of tonal beauty, that to this day evokes unstinted admiration. At the close of the second act the organ tones that Wagner lures out of the orchestra triumph over the queen of instruments itself."

How Wagner Produces His Effects.

The effects produced by Wagner are not due to a large orchestra, but to his manner of using the instruments in it. Among some of his special effects are

the employment of full harmony with what formerly would have been merely single passing notes, and above all, the exploitation of every resource of counterpoint in combination with the well developed system of harmony inherited from Beethoven, but largely added to by himself. In fact, Wagner's greatness is due to the combination of several great gifts—his melodic inventiveness, his rich harmony and his wonderful technical skill in weaving together his themes in a still richer counterpoint. This counterpoint is not, however, dry and formal, because his themes—his leading motives—are themselves full of emotional significance and not conceived, like those of the old contrapuntists, merely for formal treatment.

Richard Strauss is such a master of orchestration that I am inclined to quote his summary of the development of the art of orchestration, from his edition of the Berlioz book, which at this writing has not yet been translated. I should like to recall to the reader's mind, however, the fact that Strauss' father was a noted French-horn player; that Strauss himself has a great love for the instrument; and that when, in summing up the causes of Wagner's primacy among orchestral writers, he finds one of them in the greater technical facility of the valve horn, it is well to take this with a grain of salt and attribute it somewhat to his own affection for the instrument. The symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, according to Strauss, are enlarged string quartets with obbligato woodwind, brass and tympani, and the occasional use of other instruments of noise to strengthen the tuttis.

"Even with Beethoven, the symphony is still simply

enlarged chamber music, the orchestra being treated in a pianistic spirit which unfortunately shows itself even in the orchestral work of Schumann and Brahms. Wagner owes his polyphonic string quintet not to the Beethoven orchestra, but to the last quartets of Beethoven, in which each instrument is the peer of the others.

"Meanwhile, another kind of orchestral work was developing, for, from the time of Gluck on, the opera orchestra was gaining in coloring and in individual characteristics. Berlioz was not dramatic enough for opera nor symphonic enough for the concert stage, yet his efforts to write programmatic symphonies resulted in his discovering new effects, new possibilities in tone tints and in orchestral technics. Berlioz misses the polyphony that enriches Wagner's orchestra, and makes instruments like the second violins, violas, etc., second horns, etc., weave their threads or strands of melody into the woof. Wagner's primacy is due to his employment of the richest style of polyphony and counterpoint, the increased possibility of this through the invention of the valve horn, and his demand of solo virtuosity upon his orchestral players. His scores mark the only advance worth mentioning since Berlioz."

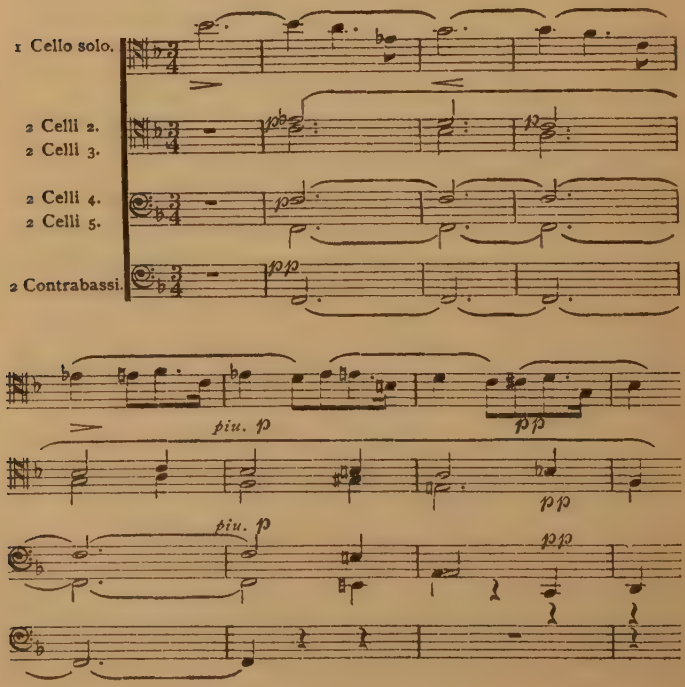
X

INSTRUMENTS OF THE ORCHESTRA

AN orchestra is an aggregation of many instruments which, under the baton of an able conductor, should play as one, so far as precision and expression are concerned. Separately, the instruments are like the paints on a palette, and the result of the composer's effort, like that of the painter's, depends upon what he has to express and his knowledge of how to use his materials in trying to express it.

The orchestra has developed into several distinct groups, which are capable of playing independently, or in union with each other, and within these groups themselves there are various subdivisions. It is the purpose of every modern composer who amounts to anything, to get as many different quartets as possible out of his orchestra. By this is meant a grouping of instruments in such a way that as many groups as possible can play in independent harmony.

It is through this system of orchestral groups that Wagner has been able to enrich orchestral tone coloring, and to say everything he wishes to say in exactly the way it should be said. We cannot, for example, imagine that the Love Motive in "Die Walküre" could be made to sound more beautiful on its first entrance in the score than it does. Nor could it. In that scene

it is exactly suited to a solo violoncello, and to a solo violoncello Wagner gives it. In order, however, to produce a perfectly homogeneous effect, in order that the violoncello quality of tone shall pervade not only the melody, but also the supporting harmony, he supports the melody with eight violoncellos, adding two double basses to give more sonorousness to the deepest note in the harmony. In other words he has made for the moment a complete orchestra out of nine violoncellos and two double basses, and produced a wondrously rich and thrilling effect—because, having a

beautiful melody to score, he knew just the instruments for which to score it. This is an admirable example of what technique accomplishes in the hands of a genius. Another composer might have used an orchestra of a hundred instruments and not have produced the exquisite thrill that Wagner with his magical orchestral touch conjures out of this group of violoncellos, a group within a group, an orchestra of violoncellos within the string band.

The woodwind instruments are capable of several similar subdivisions. Flutes, oboes and bassoons, for example, may form a group capable of producing independent harmony, so can the clarinets, and the same is the case with the brass instruments. One of Wagner's most beautiful leading motives, the Walhalla Motive in the "Ring of the Nibelung," is sounded on four trombones. In brief, then, the modern composer strives to constitute his orchestra in such a way that he secures as many independent groups, and as many little orchestras, as possible, not, however, for the purpose of using them independently all the time, but merely in order to do so occasionally for special effects or to combine them whenever he sees fit in order to enrich his tone coloring or weave his polyphony.

The grand divisions of the orchestra are the strings —violins, violas, violoncellos and double basses; the woodwind, consisting, broadly speaking, of flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons; the brass—horns, trumpets and trombones; and the instruments of percussion, or the "battery"—drums, triangles, cymbals and instruments of that kind.

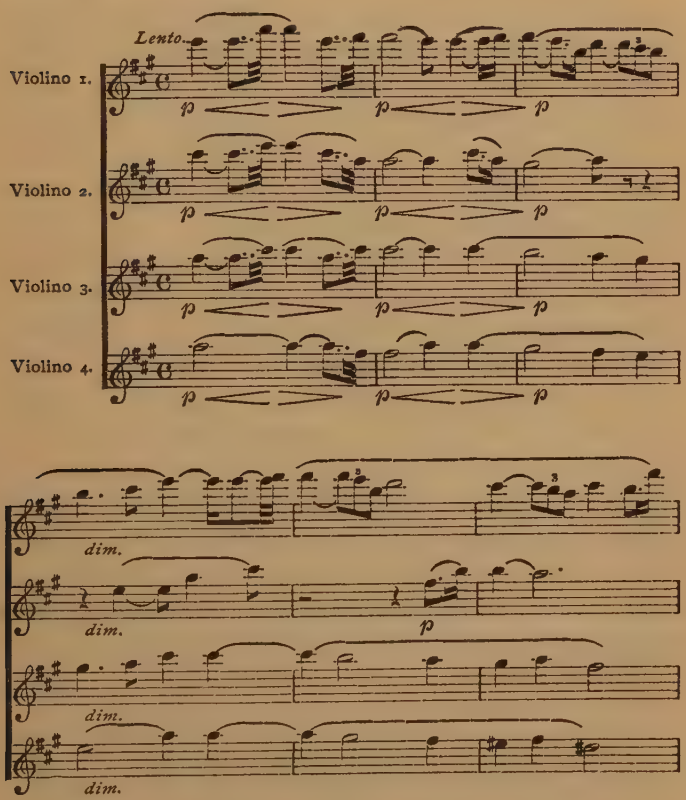
The Prima Donna of the Orchestra.

The leading instrument of the string group, and in fact the leading instrument of the orchestra, is the violin. The first violins are the prima donnas of the orchestra, and one might say that it is almost impossible to have too many of them. The first and second violins should form about one-third of an orchestra, and better still it would be for the number to exceed that proportion. The Boston Symphony Orchestra, which has about eighty-one players, has thirty violins. Theodore Thomas's New York Festival Orchestra in 1882, consisting of three hundred and fourteen instruments, had one hundred violins.

Great is the capacity of the violin. Its notes may be crisp, sharp, decisive, brilliant, or long-drawn-out and full of emotion. It has greater precision of attack than any other instrument in the orchestra. And right here it is interesting to note that while the multiplication of instruments gives greater sonority, it also gives much finer effects in soft passages. The pianissimo of one hundred violins is a very much finer pianissimo and at the same time infinitely richer and further carrying than the pianissimo of a solo violin. It is the very acme of a musical stage whisper.

In this very first and most important group of the orchestra we can find examples of utilizing subdivisions of groups. Although the violin cannot be played lower than its G string, which sounds the G below the treble clef, the violin group nevertheless has been employed entirely by itself, and even subdivided within itself. The most exquisite example of this, one cited in every

work on the orchestra worth reading, is the "Lohengrin" prelude. In this the violins are divided into four groups and on the highest register, with an effect that is most ethereal.



Modern orchestral virtuosity may be gauged by the statement that while Beethoven never ventured to score for his violins above the high F, Richard Strauss in the most casual manner carries them an octave higher.

A little contrivance of wood or metal, with teeth, can be pressed down over the strings of the violin so as to deaden its vibrations. This is called the sordine, or mute. A famous example of the use of the violins *con sordini* is the Queen Mab Scherzo in Berlioz's "Romeo et Juliette Symphonie." Another well-known use of the same effect is in Asa's Death, in Grieg's "Peer Gynt" Suite. Nothing can be more exquisite than the entrance of the muted violins after a long silence, in the last act of "Tristan und Isolde," just before *Isolde* intones the Love Death.

An unusual effect is produced by using the back of the bow instead of the horsehair. Liszt uses it in his symphonic poem, "Mazeppa," for imitating the snorting of the horse; Wagner in "Siegfried," for accompanying the mocking laugh of *Mime;* and Richard Strauss in "Feuersnot," to produce the effect of crackling flames. But, as Strauss remarks in his revision of Berlioz's work on instrumentation, it is effective only with a large orchestra. The plucking of the strings with the fingers—pizzicato—is a familiar device. Tschaikowski employed it almost throughout an entire movement, the "Pizzicato Ostinato" in his Fourth Symphony.

Viola, Violoncello and Double Bass.

The viola is a deeper violin, with a very beautiful and expressive tone. Méhul, the French composer, scored his one-act opera, "Uthal," without violins, employing the viola as the highest string instrument in his score. This, however, was not a success, the brilliant

tone of the violin being missed more and more as the performance of the work progressed, until Grétry is said to have risen in his seat and exclaimed: "A thousand francs for an E string!"

Meyerbeer, who was among the first to appreciate the beauty of the viola as a solo instrument, used a single viola for the accompaniment to *Raoul's* romance, "Plus blanche que la blanche hermine," in the first act of "Les Huguenots." Strictly speaking, he wrote it for the viola d'amour, which is somewhat larger than the ordinary viola; but it almost always is played on the latter. Berlioz made exquisite use of it in his "Harold Symphony," practically making a *dramatis persona* of it, for in the score a solo viola represents the melancholy wanderer; and in his "Don Quixote," Richard Strauss assigns to the instrument an equally important rôle.

The violoncello is one of the most tenderly expressive of all the instruments in the orchestra. Beethoven employs it for the theme of the slow movement in his Fifth Symphony, and although the viola joins with the violoncello in playing this melody, the passage owes its beauty chiefly to the latter. One of the most exquisite melodies in all symphonic music is the theme which Schubert has given to the violoncellos in the first movement of his "Unfinished Symphony." They also are used with wonderfully expressive effect in the "Tristan Vorspiel." Rossini gives a melodious passage, in the introduction to the overture to "William Tell," to five violoncellos. But the most striking employment of the violoncellos as an independent group is in the Love Motive in the first act of "Die Walküre."

Double basses first were used to simply double the violoncello part in the harmony. But through Beethoven's employment of them in the Fifth and Ninth Symphonies, in the former for a remarkably effective passage in the Scherzo and in the latter for a highly dramatic recitative, their importance as independent instruments in the orchestra was established. Verdi has made very effective use of them in the scene in "Otello" as the *Moor* approaches *Desdemona's* bed. In the introduction to "Rheingold," Wagner has half his double basses tuned down to E flat, which is half a note deeper than the usual range of the instrument, and in the second act of "Tristan und Isolde" two basses are obliged to tune their E string down to C sharp.

Dividing the String Band.

I have pointed out several examples in which the groups of instruments in the string band are divided within themselves, as in the prelude to "Lohengrin" and in the first act of "Die Walküre." The entire string band can be divided and subdivided with telling effect, when done by a master. When in the second act of "Tristan" *Brangäne* warns the lovers from her position on the watch-tower, the accompaniment stirs the soul to its depth, because it gives the listener such a weird thrill of impending danger that he almost longs to inform the lovers of their peril. In this passage Wagner divides the string band into no less than fifteen parts. In the thunder-storm in "Rheingold" the strings are divided into twenty-one parts. Richard Strauss points out how in the introduction to "Die

Walküre" much of the stormy effect is produced by strings only—sixteen second violins, twelve violas, twelve violoncellos and four double basses—a storm for strings where another composer would have unleashed a whole orchestra, including cymbals and bass drum, and crashed and thrashed about without producing a tithe of Wagner's effect! He also cites the tremolo at the beginning of the second act of "Tristan" as a wonderful example of tone painting which produces the effect of whispering foliage and conveys to the audience a sense of mystery and danger.

Theodore Thomas always was insistent that the various divisions of a string band should bow exactly alike. It is said that he once stopped an orchestra because he had detected something wrong with the tonal effect, and, after watching the players, had discovered that one violoncellist among sixteen was bowing differently from the others. Richard Strauss, on the other hand, never insists on the same bowing throughout each division of strings. He thinks it robs the melody of intensity and beauty if each individual is not allowed to play according to his own peculiar temperament.

A Passage in "Die Walküre."

In the Magic Fire Scene in the finale of "Die Walküre," Wagner wrote violin passages which not even the greatest soloist can play cleanly, yet which, when played by all the violins, simulate in *sound* the *aspect* of licking, circling flames. Indeed, the effects that Wagner understood how to draw from the or-

chestral instruments are little short of marvellous. In the "Lohengrin" prelude the tone quality of the violins is absolutely angelic in purity; while in the third act of "Siegfried," the upswinging violin passages as the young hero reaches the height where *Brünnhilde* slumbers, depict the action with a thrilling realism.

Besides the regular string band, Wagner made frequent use of the harp. It is related that at the Munich performance of "Rheingold," when the harpist Trombo protested to him that some of the passages were unplayable, the composer replied: "You don't expect me to play the harp, too, do you? You perceive the general effect I am aiming at; produce that and I shall be satisfied." Liszt, in his "Dante Symphony," uses the *glissando* of the harp as a symbol for the rising shades of *Francesca da Rimini* and her lover, and a very beautiful use of harmonics on the harp with their faint tinkle is to be found in the Waltz of the Sylphs in Berlioz's "Damnation de Faust."

The Woodwind.

Flutes, oboes and clarinets form the woodwind. One of the best known passages for flute is in the third "Leonora Overture" of Beethoven, where it is employed with conspicuous grace. Probably, however, more fun has been made of the flute than of any other orchestral instrument, and a standard musical joke runs as follows:

"Are you musical?"

"No, but I have a brother who plays the flute."

It has also been insinuated that in Donizetti's

"Lucia" the heroine goes mad, not because she has been separated from *Edgardo,* but because a flute obbligato accompanies her principal aria. The piccolo is a high flute used for shrill effects.

The instruments of both the oboe and clarinet families are reed instruments, with this difference, however: the instruments of the oboe family have two vibrating reeds in the mouthpieces; those of the clarinet family, only one. The oboe family consists of the oboe proper, the English horn which is an alt oboe, and the bassoon which is the bass of this group of instruments. In Italian the bassoon is called a *fagotto,* a name derived from its supposed resemblance to a bundle of fagots. "Candor, artless grace, tender joy, or the grief of a fragile soul, are found in the oboe's accents," says Berlioz of this instrument, and those who remember the exquisite oboe melody, with which the slow movement of Schubert's C major symphony opens, will agree with the French composer. Richard Strauss, in his "Sinfonia Domestica," employs the almost obsolete oboes d'amore to represent an "innocent, dreamy, playful child."

The English Horn in "Tristan."

The most famous use of the English horn is found in the third act of "Tristan," where it plays the "sad lay" while *Tristan* awaits news of the ship which is bearing *Isolde* toward him, and changes to a joyous strain when the ship is sighted. The bassoon and contrabassoon, besides their value as the bass of the oboe family, have certain humorous qualities, which are ad-

mirably brought out in Beethoven's Fifth and Ninth Symphonies and in the march of the clownish artisans in Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream" music. In opera, Meyerbeer made the bassoon famous by his scoring of the dance of the *Spectre Nuns* in "Robert le Diable" for it, and he also used it for the accompaniment to the female chorus in the second act of "Les Huguenots." The theme of the romanza, "Una fortiva lagrima," in Donizetti's "L'Elisir d'Amore," which Caruso sings so beautifully, is introduced by the bassoon, and with charming effect.

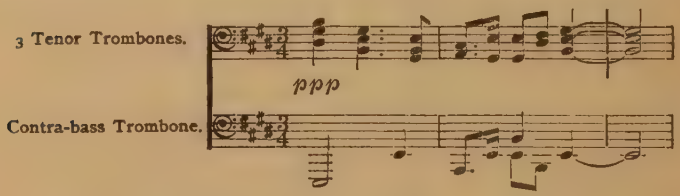
The clarinets have a large compass. Usually three kinds of clarinets (in A, B flat and C because they are transposing instruments) are employed in the orchestra, besides the bass clarinet. The possibilities of the clarinet group have been enormously developed by Wagner. It is necessary only to recall the scene of *Elsa's* bridal procession to the cathedral in the second act of "Lohengrin"; *Elizabeth's* sad exit after her prayer in the third act of "Tannhäuser," in which the melody is played by the bass clarinet, while the accompaniment is given to three flutes and eight other clarinets; the change of scene in the first act of "Götterdämmerung," when clarinets give forth the Brünnhilde Motive; and passages in the second act of "Die Meistersinger," in the scene at nightfall; while for a generally skillful use of the woodwind the introduction to the third act of "Lohengrin" is a shining example.

Brass Instruments.

People usually associate the brass instruments with noise. But as a matter of fact, wonderfully rich and soft tone effects can be produced on the brass by a composer who knows how to score for it. Just as the pianissimo of many violins is a finer pianissimo than that of a solo violin, so a much more exquisitely soft effect can be produced on a large brass group than on a few brass instruments or a single one. When modern composers increase the number of instruments in the brass group, it is not for the sake of noise, but for richer effects.

The trumpet is the soprano of the brass family. The fanfare in "Fidelio" when at the critical moment aid approaches; the Siegfried Motive and the Sword Motive, in the "Ring of the Nibelung," need only be cited to prove the effectiveness of the instrument in its proper place; and Richard Strauss instances the demoniacal and fateful effect of the deep trumpet tones in the introduction to the first act of Bizet's "Carmen."

Although the notes of the trombone are produced by a slide, this instrument belongs to the trumpet family. For this reason, in the "Ring of the Nibelung," Wagner, in addition to the usual three tenor trombones, reintroduced the almost obsolete bass trombone. He wanted a trombone group complete in itself, and thus to be able to utilize the peculiar tone color of the instrument; as witness in the Walhalla Motive, where it is scored for the three tenor trombones and bass trombone, resulting in a wonderfully rich and velvety quality of tone. Excepting Wagner and Richard Strauss,

there probably is not a composer who would not have used the bass tuba here instead of taking the trouble to revive the bass trombone. But Wagner wanted an unusually rich tone which should be solemn without a trace of sombreness, and his keen instrumental color sense informed him that he could secure it with the bass trombone, which, as it belongs to the trumpet family, has a touch of trumpet brilliancy, whereas the tone of the bass tuba is darker.

Mozart employed the trombone with fine effect in *Sarastro's* solo in the "Magic Flute"; Schubert showed his genius for instrumentation by the manner in which he used them in the introduction to his C major symphony, as well as in the first movement of that symphony, in which a theme is given out by three trombones in unison; and another familiar example of good scoring for trombones is in the introduction to the third act of "Lohengrin." In the Death Prophecy scene in the second act of "Die Walküre," a trumpet melody is supported by the four trombones, another instance of Wagner's sense of homogeneity in sound, since trumpets and trombones belong to the same family. In fact, throughout the "Ring," as Strauss points out, Wagner wrote for his trombones in four parts, adding the bass trombone in order to differentiate wholly be-

tween it and the tuba, which latter he used with the horns, with which it is properly grouped.

Wagner has a tremendous tuba recitative in a "Faust Overture," and in the Funeral March in the "Götterdämmerung" he introduces tenor tubas in order, again, to differentiate between the tone color of tubas and trombones and not to be obliged to employ trombones in this particular scene, the general tone color of the tuba being far more sombre than that of the trombone.

Richard Strauss's Tribute to the Horn.

To mention tubas and trombones before the horns is very much like putting the cart before the horse, but I have reserved the horns for the last of the brass on account of the great tribute which Richard Strauss has paid them. In the early orchestras one rarely found more than two horns. Beethoven used four in the Ninth Symphony, and now it is not at all unusual to find eight.

"Of all instruments," says Richard Strauss, "the horn is perhaps the one that best can be joined with other groups. To substantiate this in all its numerous phases, I should be obliged to quote the entire 'Meistersinger' score. For I do not think I exaggerate when I maintain that the greatly developed technique of the valve horn has made it possible that a score which, with the addition of a third trumpet, a harp and a tuba, employs the same instruments as Beethoven used in his Fifth Symphony, has become with every bar something entirely different, something wholly new and unheard of.

"Surely the two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets and two bassoons of Mozart have been exhausted by Wagner in every direction of their technical possibilities and plastically combined with an almost weird perception of all their tone secrets; the string quintet, through the most refined divisions into parts, and with added brilliance through the employment of the harp, produces innumerable new tone effects, and by superb polyphony is brought to a height and warmth of emotional expression such as never before was dreamed of; trumpet and trombones are made to express every phase of solemn or humorous characterization—but the main thing is the tireless participation of the horn, now for the melody, now for filling out, now as bass. The 'Meistersinger' score is the horn's hymn of praise. Through the introduction and perfection of the valve horn the greatest improvement in the technique of scoring, since Berlioz's day, has been made possible.

"To illustrate exhaustively this Protean character of the horn, I should like (again!) to go through the scores of the great magician, bar by bar, beginning with 'Rheingold.'

"Whether it rings through the primeval German forest with the sunny exuberance of *Siegfried's* youthful heart and joy of living; whether in Liszt's 'Mazeppa' it dies out in the last hoarse gasp of the Cossack prince nigh unto death in the vast desert of the steppes; whether it conjures the childlike longing of *Siegfried* for the mother he never has known; whether it hovers over the gently undulating sea which is to bring *Isolde's* gladdening form to the dying *Tristan,* or nods *Hans Sachs'* thanks to the faithful *'Prentice;* whether in

Erik's dream it causes in a few hollow accents the North Sea to break on the lonely coast; bestows upon the apples of *Freia* the gift of eternal youth; pokes fun at the curtain-heroes ('Meistersinger,' Act III); plies the cudgels on *Beckmesser* with the jealous *David* and his comrades, and is the real instigator of the riot; or sings in veiled notes of the wounds of *Tristan*—always the horn, in its place and to be relied on, responds, unique in its manifold meanings and its brilliant significance."

Famous horn passages in the works of other composers are in the trio of the Scherzo in the "Eroica Symphony"; in the second movement of Schubert's C major symphony, the passage of which Schumann said that the notes of the horns just before the return of the principal subject were like the voice of an angel; in the opening of Weber's "Freischütz" overture; in the introduction to *Michaela's* romance in "Carmen"; and in the opening theme of the slow movement of Tschaikowsky's Fifth Symphony, which is the perfection of a melodic phrase for solo horn.

Instruments of Percussion.

In the "battery" the instruments of prime importance are the tympani. Beethoven gave the cue to what could be accomplished with these in the scherzo of the Fifth Symphony and also in the octave thumps in the scherzo of the Ninth Symphony, while for a weirdly sombre effect there is nothing equal to the faint roll of the tympani at the beginning and end of the Funeral March in "Götterdämmerung." Cymbals are

used in several ways. Besides the ordinary clash, Wagner has produced a sound somewhat like that of a gong, by the sharp stroke of a drum-stick on one cymbal, and also a roll by using a pair of drum-sticks on one cymbal.

Among composers since Beethoven, Weber, Liszt, Saint-Saëns, Dvorak, Tschaikowsky, and, of course, Richard Strauss—it hardly is necessary to mention either Berlioz or Wagner again—have shown brilliant technique in orchestration. On the other hand, Schumann and Brahms do not appear to have understood or to have taken the trouble to understand the individual characteristics of orchestral instruments, and, as a result, their works for orchestra are not as effective as they should be. Their orchestration has been called "muddy."

It is Richard Strauss's opinion that the next advancement in orchestration will be brought about by adding largely to certain groups of instruments which now have only comparatively few representatives in the orchestra. He instances that at the Brussels Conservatory one of the professors had Mozart's G minor symphony performed for him on twenty-two clarinets, of which four were basset horns (alto clarinets), two brass clarinets, and one contra-bass clarinet; and he suggests that it will be along such lines that the orchestra of the future will be enlarged. With an orchestra with all the family groups of instruments complete in the manner suggested by Strauss, and used by a musical genius, a genius who combines with melodic invention virtuosity of instrumentation, marvellous results are yet to be achieved.

XI

CONCERNING SYMPHONIES

I HAVE said that music, like all other arts, had a somewhat formless beginning, then gradually acquired form, then became too rigidly formal, and in modern times, while not discarding form, has become freer in its expression of emotion.

Instrumental music, since the beginning of the classical period, has been governed largely by the symphony, which the reader should bear in mind is nothing more than a sonata for orchestra, the form having first developed on the pianoforte and having been handed over by it to the aggregation of instruments. Mr. Parry, in a book from which I have had previous occasion to quote, "The Evolution of the Art of Music," has several apt paragraphs concerning the earlier development of the sonata, which of course apply with equal force to the symphony. After stating that the instinct of the composers who first sought the liberation of music from the all-predominating counterpoint, impelled them to develop movements of wider and freer range, which should admit of warm melodic expression, without degenerating into incoherent, rambling ecstasy, Mr. Parry continues: "They had the sense to see from the first that mere formal continuous melody is not the most suitable type for instrumental music.

There is deep-rooted in the matter of all instrumental music the need of some rhythmic vitality. These composers then set themselves to devise a scheme in which, to begin with, the contour of connected melodic phrases, supported and defined by simple harmonic accompaniment, gave the impression of definite tonality—that is, of being decisively in some particular key and giving an unmistakable indication of it. They found out how to proceed by giving the impression of using that key and passing to another without departing from the characteristic spirit and mood of the music, as shown in the 'subjects' and figures; and how to give the impression of relative completeness, by closing in a key which is in strong contrast to the first, and so round off one-half of the design.

"But this point being in apposition to the starting point, leaves the mind dissatisfied and in expectation of fresh disclosures; so they made the balance complete by resuming the subjects and melodic figures of the first part in extraneous keys, and working back to the starting point; and they made their final close with the same figures as were used to conclude the first half, but in the principal key instead of the key of contract." This is a somewhat more elaborate method of describing the sonata form than I have adopted in the division of this book relating to the pianoforte.

Esthetic Purpose of the Symphony.

Later on in his book, Mr. Parry, in discussing the type of sonata movement which was fairly established by the time of Haydn and Mozart, gives a simpler

esthetic explanation, pointing out that the first part of the movement aims at definiteness of subject, definiteness of contrast of keys, definiteness of regular balancing groups of bars and rhythms, definiteness of progressions. By the time this first division is over the mind has had enough of such definiteness, and wants a change. The second division, therefore, represents the breaking up of the subjects into their constituent elements of figure and rhythm, the obliteration of the sense of regularity by grouping the bars irregularly; and aims, by moving constantly from key to key, to give the sense of artistic confusion; which, however, is always regulated by some inner but disguised principle of order. When the mind has gone through enough of the pleasing sense of bewilderment—the sense that has made riddles attractive to the human creature from time immemorial—the scheme is completed by resuming the orderly methods of the first division and firmly re-establishing the principal theme which has been carefully avoided since the commencement.

The earlier symphonic writers usually wrote their symphonies in three movements: the first or sonata movement; a second slow movement in a simpler type of form, usually of the song, aria, or rondo type; and a final movement in lively time, also usually adapted to the rondo form. Concerning this three-movement symphony of the early writers, it was said by an old-time wit that they wrote the first movement to show what they could do, the second movement to show what they could feel, and the third movement to show how glad they were it was over—and this may be said

to describe the view of the ultra-modern music-lover toward rigidity of form in general.

Regarding form in music there is much prejudice one way or the other. The sonnet in poetry certainly is a rigid form; and yet those poets who have mastered it have produced extremely effective and highly artistic poems, and poems abounding in profound emotional expression. Walt Whitman, on the other hand, was quite formless, and yet he is sure to be ranked in time as one of the greatest poets of his age. Wagner's idea was that the symphonic form had reached its climax with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony; yet it is by no means incredible that if Wagner in his maturer years had undertaken to compose a symphony, the result would have disproved his own theory.

Seems to Hamper Modern Composers.

The symphonic form, however, or, to be more exact, the sonata form, seems to hamper every modern composer when he writes for the pianoforte, and the fact that most of Beethoven's pianoforte music was written in this form appears to be the reason for his works somewhat falling into disuse. On the other hand, the form is undoubtedly holding out better in the orchestral version of the sonata, the symphony, because the tone color of orchestral instruments gives it greater variety. Tschaikowsky, Dvorak and Brahms have worked successfully, and the two former even brilliantly, in this form; and if Brahms in his symphonies appears too continent, too classically reserved, it would seem to

be not so much the form itself which is to blame, as his lack of skill in instrumentation.

My own personal preference is for the freer form developed by Liszt in the symphonic poem, in which a leading motive, or possibly several motives skillfully varied dominate the whole composition and give it esthetic and psychological unity; and for the still freer development of instrumental music in the tone poem of Richard Strauss. But neither the symphonic poems of Liszt nor the tone poems of Strauss are formless music. That should be well understood, although it should be borne in mind with equal distinctness that these manifestations of the genius of two great composers show a complete liberation from the shackles of the classical symphony. In the end the test is found in the music itself. If the music of a symphonic poem which sets out to express a given title or a given motto, if the music of a tone poem which starts out to interpret a programmatic story or device, is worthy to be ranked with the great productions of the art, it not only is profoundly interesting as music, but gains immensely in interest through its incidental secondary meaning. It is the old story of art for art's sake—art for the purpose of merely gratifying the eye or the ear—or art for the purpose of conveying something besides itself to the beholder or the listener; and it seems to me that, in the history of the art, art for art's sake has always been the more primitive expression and eventually has been obliged to give way.

The Naive Symphonists.

At the risk of repeating what already has been said of the sonata, the symphony may be described as a work in four movements—the first movement, usually an Allegro, sometimes with a slow introduction, but more frequently without one; a second movement, ordinarily called the slow movement, and usually in Adagio or Andante; a third movement, either minuet or scherzo; and a final movement in fast time and usually in rondo form. It was Haydn who pretty definitely established these divisions of the symphony. He composed in all one hundred and twenty-five symphonies, of which only a few appear on modern concert programs, and even these but occasionally. Their music is marked by a simplicity bordering on naïveté, and the orchestration is a string quartet with a mere filling out by other instruments. Mozart was of a deeper and more dramatic nature than Haydn, and the expression of his thought was more intense. In the same way, there is a greater warmth and color in his orchestration. Nevertheless, the three finest of his forty-nine symphonies, the E flat, G minor and Jupiter, composed in 1788, seem almost childlike in their artless grace and beauty to us moderns.

Beethoven's first two symphonies were written under the influence of Haydn and Mozart, but with the third he becomes distinctly epic in his musical utterance; and this symphony, both in regard to variety and depth of expression and skillful use of orchestral instruments, is as great an advance upon the work of his predecessors as, let us say, Tschaikowsky is upon Mendelssohn.

Beethoven to the Fore.

There are apparent in the sequences of Beethoven's symphonies certain climaxes and certain rests. Thus the Third is the climax of the first three. The Fourth is far less profound; the master relaxes. But the Fifth, with its compact, vigorous theme, which Beethoven himself is said to have described as Fate knocking at the door, and his skillful introduction of this theme in varied form in each of the movements, is by many regarded as his masterpiece—even greater than the Ninth. After this he seems to have relaxed again in the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth, in order to prepare himself for the climax of his career in his final symphonic work, the Ninth. In the slow movement of the Sixth (the "Pastoral"), in which he imitates the call of birds, he gives the direction: "*mehr Empfindung als Malerei*" (more feeling than painting), a direction which often is quoted by opponents of modern program music; notwithstanding the fact that Beethoven, in spite of his own qualifying words, straightway indulged in "painting" of the most childish description. The Seventh Symphony is an extremely brilliant work and the Eighth an exceedingly joyous one, while with the Ninth, as though he himself felt that he was going beyond the limits of orchestral music, he introduced in the last movement solo singers and a chorus, but not with as much effect as the employment of this unusual scheme might lead one to anticipate, because, unfortunately, his writing for voices is extremely awkward.

Schubert's Genius.

Like Beethoven, Schubert wrote nine symphonies, but the "Unfinished," which was his eighth, and the C major, his ninth, which was discovered by Schumann in the possession of Schubert's brother and sent to Mendelssohn for production at Leipzig, are the ones which seem destined to survive. They are among the most beautiful examples of orchestral music—the first movement of the "Unfinished Symphony" full of dramatic moments as well as of exquisite melody, the slow movement a veritable rose of orchestration; while as regards the C major symphony, Schumann's reference to its "heavenly length" sufficiently describes its inspiration.

Mendelssohn's Italian and Scotch symphonies are his best known orchestral works. They are clear and serene, and for any one who thinks a symphony is something very abstruse and wants to be gradually familiarized with its mysteries, they form an easily taken and innocuous dose—the symphony made palatable. Of Schumann's four symphonies, the one in E flat, the "Rhenish," supposed to represent a series of impressions of the Rhine country, the fourth movement especially, to represent the exaltation which possessed his soul during a religious ceremony in the cathedral at Cologne; and the D minor, which latter really is a fantasia, deserve to rank highest. In the D minor the movements follow each other without pause; there is a certain thematic relationship between the first and the last movements, and this connection gives the work a freer and more modern effect. But Schumann was

either indifferent to, or ignorant of, the advance in orchestration which had taken place since Beethoven. Practically the same thing applies to Brahms, who, however, deserves the credit for introducing into the symphony a new style of movement, the intermezzo, which takes the place of the scherzo or minuet. Rubinstein deserves "honorable mention"; but the most modern heroes of symphony are Dvorak, with his "New World," and Tschaikowsky, with his "Pathètique." Such works are life-preservers that may help keep a sinking art form afloat. But modern orchestral music is tending more and more toward the symphonic poem and the tone poem.

Liszt has written two symphonies: the "Faust Symphony," consisting of three movements, which represent the three principal characters of Goethe's drama, *Faust, Gretchen,* and *Mephistopheles;* and a symphony to Dante's "Divina Commedia." In both these symphonies a chorus is introduced. Of his symphonic poems, the best known are "Les Préludes," and "Tasso, Lamento e Trionfo." In these symphonic poems Liszt has made use of the principle of the leitmotif in orchestral music. They are dramatic episodes for orchestra, superbly instrumentated, profoundly beautiful in thought and intention---great program music in fact, because conceived in accordance with the highest canons of the art, and infinitely more interesting than "pure" music because they mean something. By some people Liszt is regarded as a mere charlatan, by others as a great composer. Not only was he a great composer, but one of the very greatest.

The Saint-Saëns symphonic poems, "Rouet d'Om-

phale," "Phaeton," "Danse Macabre," should be mentioned as successful works of this class, but considerably below Liszt's in genuine musical value. And then, there are the orchestral impressions of Charles Martin Loeffler, among which the symphonic poem, "La Mort de Tintagiles," is the most conspicuous. A separate chapter is devoted to Richard Strauss.

Wagner is not supposed to have been a purely orchestral composer. Theoretically, he wrote for the theatre, and his orchestra was (again theoretically) only part of a triple scheme of voice, action and instrumental accompaniment. But put the instrumental part of any of his great music-drama episodes on a concert program, and with the first wave of the conductor's baton and the first chord, you forget everything else that has gone before!

XII

RICHARD STRAUSS AND HIS MUSIC

RICHARD STRAUSS—a new name to conjure with in music! His banner is borne by a band of enthusiasts like those who, many years ago, carried the flag of Wagner to the front. "Did not Wagner put a full stop after the word 'music'?" some will ask in surprise. "Did he not strike the final note? Are the 'Ring,' 'Tristan' and 'Parsifal' not to be succeeded by an eternal pause? Is there something still to be achieved in music as in other arts and sciences?"

Something new certainly has been achieved by Richard Strauss. It forms neither a continuation of Wagner nor an opposition to Wagner. It has nothing to do with Wagner, beyond that Strauss appropriates whatever in the progression of art the latest master has a right to take from his predecessors. Strauss is, in fact, one of the most original and individual of composers.

He has been a student, not a copyist, of Wagner. Thus, where others who have sat at the feet of the Bayreuth master have written poor imitations of Wagner, and have therefore failed even to continue the school, giving only feeble echoes of its great master, Strauss has struck out for himself. With a mastery of

every technical resource, acquired by deep and patient study, he has given wholly new value and importance to a form of art entirely different from the music-drama. The music of the average modern Wagner disciple sounds not like Wagner, but like Wagner and water. Richard Strauss sounds like Richard Strauss.

One reason for this is that his art work, like Wagner's, has an independent intellectual reason for being. Let me not for one moment be understood as belittling Wagner, in order to magnify Strauss. Wagner is the one creator of an art-form who also seems destined to remain its greatest exponent. Other creators of art-forms have been mere pioneers, leaving to those who have come after them the development and rounding out of what with them were experiments. The story of the sonata form may be said to have begun with Philipp Emanuel Bach and to have been "continued in our next" to Beethoven, with "supplements" ever since. The music-drama had its tentative beginnings in "The Flying Dutchman," its consummation in "Parsifal." The years from 1843 to 1882 lay between, but the music-drama was guided ever by the same hand, the master hand of Richard Wagner. No, it would be self-defeating folly to make Wagner appear less in order to have Strauss appear more.

Originator of the Tone Poem.

Nor does Richard Strauss require such tactics. He has made three excursions into music-drama and he may make others. But his fame, at present, rests mainly upon what he has accomplished as an instrumental composer,

and in the self-created realm of the Tone Poem. Tone poem is a new term in music. It stands for something that outstrips the symphonic poem of Liszt, something larger both in its boundaries and in its intellectual and musical scope. Strauss does not limit himself by the word symphonic. He leaves himself free to give full range to his ideas. A composer of "program music," his works are so stupendous in scope that the word symphonic would have hampered him. His "Also Sprach Zarathustra" ("Thus Spake Zarathustra") and "Ein Heldenleben" ("A Hero's Life") are not symphonic poems, but tone poems of enormous proportions. These, his last two instrumental productions, together with the growing familiarity of the musical public with his beautiful and eloquent songs, established his reputation in this country. To-day, a Strauss work on a program means as much to the musically elect as a Wagner work meant a quarter of a century ago. In fact, to advanced musicians, to those who are not content to rest upon what has been achieved, but are ready to welcome further serious effort, Strauss's works form the latest great utterance in music. Let me repeat verbatim a conversation that occurred on a recent rainy night, the date of an important concert.

He: "Are you going to the concert to-night?"

She: (*Looking out and seeing that it still is raining hard*) "Do they play anything by Richard Strauss?"

He: "Not to-night."

She: "Then I'm not going."

This woman could meet the most enthusiastic admirer of Beethoven or Wagner on his own ground. But when she heard "Ein Heldenleben" under Emil

Paur's baton at a concert of the New York Philharmonic Society, she heard what she had been waiting twenty years for—something new in music that also was something great; something that was not merely an imitation of what she had heard a hundred times before, but something which pointed the way to untraveled paths. It always is woman who throws the first rose at the feet of genius.

Not a Juggler with the Orchestra.

One first looks at Richard Strauss in mere amazement at the size of what he has produced. "Thus Spake Zarathustra" lasts thirty-three minutes, "A Hero's Life" forty-five—considerable lengths for orchestral works. This initial sense of "bigness," as such, having worn off, one becomes aware of marvellous tone combinations and orchestral effects. Listening again, one discovers that these daring instrumental combinations have not been entered into merely for the sake of juggling with the orchestra, but because the composer, being a modern of moderns, has the most modern message in music to deliver, and, in order to deliver it, has developed the modern orchestra to a state of efficiency and versatility of tonal expression beyond any of his predecessors. Richard Strauss scores, in the most casual manner, an octave higher than Beethoven dared go with the violins. When Beethoven had carried the violins as high as the F above the staff, he stopped. What should have been higher he wrote an octave lower. All the strings in the Richard Strauss orchestra are scored corre-

spondingly high. But this is not done as a mere fad. What Richard Strauss accomplishes with the strings is not merely queer or bizarre. What he seeks and obtains is genuine original musical effects. Often the highest register is used by him in a few of the strings only, because, for certain polyphonic effects—the weaving and interweaving of various themes—he divides and subdivides all the strings into numerous groups. For the same reason, he has regularly added four or five hitherto rarely used instruments to the woodwind and scores, regularly, for eight horns, besides employing from four to five trumpets.

While he has increased the technical difficulties of every instrument, what he requires of them is not impossible. He does, indeed, call for first-rate artists in his orchestra; but so did Wagner as compared with Beethoven. He knows every instrument thoroughly, for he has taken lessons on all; and, therefore, when he is striving for new instrumental effects he is not putting problems which cannot be legitimately solved. His "Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks" makes, possibly, the greatest demand of all his works on an orchestra. But, if properly played, it is one of the most bizarre and amusing scherzos in the repertoire. In his "Don Quixote," he has gone outside the list of orchestral instruments; and in the scene where *Don Quixote* has his tilt with the windmill, he has introduced a regular theatrical wind-machine. And why not? The effect to be produced justifies the means. There is an *à capella* chorus by Strauss for sixteen voices. These are not divided into two double quartets, or into four quartets, but the composition actu-

ally is scored in sixteen parts. He shrinks from no musical problem.

Not Mere Bulk and Noise.

When "A Hero's Life" was produced in New York it was given at a public rehearsal and concert of the Philharmonic. It made such a profound impression—it was recognized as music, not as mere bulk and noise—that it had to be repeated at a following public rehearsal and concert, thus having the honor of four consecutive performances by the same society in one season. Previous performances of Strauss's works, mainly by the Chicago Orchestra, under Thomas, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, had begun to direct public attention to this composer. But the "Heldenleben" performances by the Philharmonic created something of a sensation. They made the "hit" to which the public unconsciously had been working up for several seasons. Large as are the dimensions of "A Hero's Life," Richard Strauss had chosen a subject that made a very direct appeal. Despite its wealth of polyphony and theme combination, the score told, without a word of synopsis, a clear intelligible story of a hero's material victory, followed by a greater moral one. It placed the public on a human, familiar footing with a composer whom previously they had regarded with more awe than interest. Here was music interesting as mere music, but all the more interesting because it had an intellectual message to convey.

Life and Truth.

What is the difference between classical and modern music? Write a chapter or a book on it, and the difference still remains just this: Classical music is the expression of beauty; modern music the expression of life and truth. Modern music seems entering upon a new era with Strauss, which does not necessarily exclude beauty. It is beginning to illustrate itself, so to speak, like the author-artist who can both write and draw. To-day, music not only expresses truth, but represents it pictorially. How long will the time be in coming when a composer will wave his bâton, the orchestra strike a chord—and we be not only listeners but also beholders, hearing the chord, and seeing at the same time its image floating above the orchestra?

In his "Melomaniacs," the most remarkable collection of musical stories I have read, Mr. Huneker has a tale called "A Piper of Dreams," the most advanced piece of musical fiction I know of. This piper of dreams produces music which is *seen*. "Do you know why you like it?" Mr. Huneker asked me, when I told him how intensely I admired the story. "Because," he continued, "the hero of the story is a Richard Strauss."

Of course, this brilliantly written story was a daring incursion into a seemingly impossible future. Yet it points a tendency. When shall we have music that can be seen? Considering how closely related are the laws of acoustics and optics, is a "Piper of Dreams" so visionary? Who knows but that the music of the future may be visible sound—the work of a piper of

dreams? Sometimes, when listening to Strauss, I think Mr. Huneker's *Piper* is tuning up.

Richard Strauss's tone poems are large in plan. In fact they are colossal. They show him to be a man of great intellectual activity, as well as an inspired composer. The latter, of course, is the test by which a musical work stands or falls. No matter how intellectually it is planned, if it is inadequate musically it fails. But if it is musically inspired, it gains vastly in effect when it rests on a brain basis.

Literally Tone Dramas.

That Richard Strauss is the most significant figure in the musical world to-day seems to me too patent to admit of discussion. The only question to be considered is, how has he become so? The question is best answered by showing what a Richard Strauss tone poem is. Take "Thus Spake Zarathustra" and "A Hero's Life." Without going into an elaborate discussion I must insist that, to consider Richard Strauss as in any way a development from Berlioz or Liszt, shows a deplorable unfamiliarity with his works. Berlioz wrote program music. Liszt wrote program music. Richard Strauss writes program music. But this point of resemblance is wholly superficial. Berlioz admittedly strove to adhere to the orthodox symphonic form. Liszt aptly named his own productions "symphonic poems." They are much freer in form than Berlioz's, and possibly pointed the way to the Richard Strauss tone poem. But when we examine the musical kernel, the difference at once is apparent. Poly-

phony, that is, the simultaneous interweaving of many themes, was foreign to Berlioz and Liszt. Their style is mainly homophonic. Richard Strauss is a polyphonic composer second not even to Wagner, whose system of leading motives in his music-dramas made his scores such marvellous polyphonic structures. Such, too, are the scores of Richard Strauss's tone poems. None but a master of polyphony could have attempted to express in music what Richard Strauss has expressed. For are not his tone poems literally tone dramas?

It was like a man of great intellectual activity, such as Richard Strauss is, to select for musical illustration the Faust of modern literature—Nietzke's "Zarathustra." The composer became interested in Nietzke's works in 1892, when he was writing his music-drama, "Guntram." The full fruition of his study of this philosopher's works is "Thus Spake Zarathustra." But this is not an attempt to set Nietzke to music, not an effort to express a system of philosophy through sound. It is rather the musical portrayal of a quest—a being longing to solve the problems of life, finding at the end of his varied pilgrimage that which he had left at the beginning, Nature deep and inscrutable.

Musically, the great *fortissimo* outburst in C major, which, at the beginning of the work, greets the seeker on the mountain-top with the glories of the sunrise, is the symbol of Nature. The seeker descends the mountain. He pursues the quest amid many surroundings, among all sorts and conditions of men. He experiences joy, passion, remorse. In wisdom, perchance, lies the final solution of the problem of life. But the

emptiness of "wisdom" is depicted by the composer with the keenest satire in a learned, yet dry, five-part fugue. The seeker's varied experiences form as many divisions of the tone poem. There is even a waltz theme. Unending joy! Therein he may reach the end of his quest.

But hark! a sombre strophe, followed twelve times by the even fainter stroke of a bell! Then a theme winging its flight on the highest register of modern instrumentation, until it seems to rise over the orchestra and vanish into thin air. It is the soul of the seeker, his earthly quest ended; while the theme which greeted him at sunrise on the mountain-top resounds in the orchestral depths, the symbol of Nature, still mysterious, still inscrutable.

An Intellectual Force in Music.

Even this brief synopsis suggests that "Zarathustra" is planned on a large scale. It presupposes an intellectual grasp of the subject on the composer's part. In its choice, in the selection and rejection of details and in outlining his scheme, Richard Strauss shows that he has thoroughly assimilated Nietzke. But, at a certain point, the musician in Richard Strauss asserts himself above the litterateur. "Thus Spake Zarathustra" was not intended for a preachment, save indirectly. From what occurs during that vain quest, from the last deep mysterious chord of the Nature theme, let the listener draw his own conclusion. In the last analysis, "Thus Spake Zarathustra" is not a philosophical treatise, but a tone poem. In the last analysis,

Richard Strauss is not a philosopher, but a musician.

"A Hero's Life" is another work of large plan. Like "Zarathustra," it derives its importance as an art-work from its eloquence as a musical composition. With a musical work, no matter how intellectual or dramatic its foundation, its test ever will be its value as pure music. Richard Wagner's theories would have fallen like a house of cards, had not his music been eloquent and beautiful. But as his music gained wonderfully in added eloquence and beauty by induction from its intellectual content, so does Strauss's. The fact is, music is music, while philosophies come and go. Yesterday it was Schopenhauer; to-day it is Nietzke; to-morrow it will be another. Doubtless, Wagner thought his "Ring" was Schopenhauer's "Negation of the Will to Live" set to music. Possibly, Richard Strauss thought Nietzke looked out between the bars of "Thus Spake Zarathustra." In point of fact, neither Wagner nor Richard Strauss incorporated their favorite philosophers in their music. Wagner may have derived his inspiration from his reading of Schopenhauer, and Richard Strauss from Nietzke, for one mind inspires another. But the real result, both in Wagner and Strauss, was great music.

This is made clear by Strauss's "A Hero's Life." Like "Zarathustra," it would be effective as music without a line of programmatic explanation. The latter simply adds to its effectiveness by giving it the further interest of "fiction" and ethical import. In "A Hero's Life" we hear (and *see*, if you like) the hero him-

self, his jealous adversaries, the woman whose love consoles him, the battle in which he wins his greatest worldly triumph, his mission of peace, the world's indifference and the final flight of his soul toward the empyrean. All this is depicted musically with the greatest eloquence. The battlefield scene is a stupendous massing of orchestral forces. On the other hand, the amorous episode, entitled "The Hero's Helpmate," is impassioned and charming.

In the world's indifference to the hero's mission of peace, there is little doubt that Strauss was indulging in a retrospect of his own struggles for recognition. For here are heard numerous reminiscences of his earlier works—his tone poems, "Don Juan," "Death and Transfiguration," "Macbeth," "Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks," "Thus Spake Zarathustra," "Don Quixote"; his music-drama, "Guntram"; and his song, "Dream During Twilight." These reminiscences give "A Hero's Life" the same autobiographical interest as attaches to Wagner's "Meistersinger."

Tribute to Wagner.

Strauss pays a tribute to Wagner in the one-act opera, "Feuersnot" ("Fire Famine"). According to the old legend on which this *Sing-gedicht* (song-poem) is founded, a young maiden has offended her lover. But the lover being a magician, casts a spell over the town, causing the extinction of all fire, bringing cold and darkness upon the entire place, until the maiden relents and smiles again upon him, when the spell is lifted and the fires once more burn brightly. The

young lover, *Kunrad,* in rebuking the people of the city, says:

> "In this house which to-day I destroy,
> Once lodged Richard the Master.
> Disgracefully did ye expel him
> In envy and baseness," etc., etc.

Accompanying these lines, Strauss introduces themes from Wagner's "Ring of the Nibelung." Undoubtedly "Richard the Master," in the above lines, is Richard Wagner.

While Mr. Paur was not the first orchestral leader who has played Strauss's music in this country, he may justly be regarded as Strauss's prophet in New York at least. Not only do we owe to him the performances of "A Hero's Life," which definitely "created" Strauss here, but it was he who brought forward "Thus Spake Zarathustra," when he was conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. As long ago as 1889, when Mr. Paur was conductor at Mannheim, he invited Strauss to direct his symphony in F minor there. Strauss accepted and also brought with him his just completed "Macbeth," asking to be allowed to try it over with the orchestra, as he wanted to hear it—a request which was readily granted. Afterward, at Mr. Paur's house, Strauss's piano quartet was played, with the composer himself at the piano and Mr. Paur at the violin. It is not surprising that when Mr. Paur came over here as the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, he championed Richard Strauss's work, continued to do so after he became conductor of the New York Philharmonic Society, and probably still does as conductor of the Pittsburg Orchestra.

Strauss has become such an important figure in the

world of music that it is interesting to note what has been done to bring his work before the American public. Theodore Thomas, with the artistic liberality which he has always displayed toward every serious effort in music, produced Strauss's symphony in F minor, which bears date 1883, as early as December 13, 1884, with the New York Philharmonic Society. It was the first performance of this work anywhere. Strauss was not, however, heard again at the concerts of this organization until January, 1892, when Seidl brought out "Death and Transfiguration."

After he became conductor of the Chicago Orchestra, Thomas gave many performances of Richard Strauss's works—in 1895, the prelude to "Guntram," "Death and Transfiguration" and "Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks"; in 1897, "Don Juan" and "Thus Spake Zarathustra"; in 1899, "Don Quixote" and the symphonic fantasia, "Italy"; in 1900, "A Hero's Life" (the first performance in this country) and the "Serenade" for wind instruments; in 1902, "Macbeth" (first performance in this country) and the "Feuersnot" fragment. Several of these works, besides those noted, had their first performance in this country by the Chicago Orchestra, and several have had repeated performances.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra also has a fine record as regards the performance of Richard Strauss's works. Nikisch, Paur, and Gericke are the conductors under whom these performances have been given. Several of the works have been played repeatedly not only in Boston, but in other cities where this famous orchestra gives concerts.

Richard Straussiana.

As data regarding Strauss's life, at the disposal of English readers, are both scant and scattered, it may not be amiss to tell here something of his career. He was born on June 11, 1864, in Munich, where his father, Franz Strauss, played the French-horn in the Royal Orchestra, and was noted for his remarkable proficiency on the instrument. The elder Strauss lived long enough to watch with pride his son's growing fame. Richard began to play the piano when he was four years old. At the age of six he heard some children singing around a Christmas tree. "I can compose something like that," he said, and he produced unaided a three-part song. When he went to school, his mother by chance put covers of music paper on his books. As a result, he occupied much of his time composing on this paper, and during a French lesson sketched out the scherzo of a string quartet which has been published as his Opus 2. While he was still at school, he composed a symphony in D minor. This was played by the Royal Orchestra under Levi. When, in response to calls for the composer, Richard came out, some one in the audience asked: "What has that boy to do with the symphony?" "Oh, he's only the composer," was the reply. The year before (1880), the Royal Opera prima donna, Meysenheim, had publicly sung three of his songs.

During his advanced school years, his piano lessons continued, he received lessons in the violin, and went through a severe course in composition with the Royal Kapellmeister, Meyer. In 1882, he attended the Uni-

versity of Munich. His "Serenade" for wind instruments, composed at this time, attracted the attention of Hans von Bülow, under whom he studied for a while at Raff's conservatory in Frankfort. Bülow invited him to Meiningen as co-director of the orchestra, and when in November, 1885, Bülow resigned as conductor, Strauss became his successor, remaining there, however, only till April, 1886. His symphonic fantasia, "Italy," had its origin through a trip to Rome and Naples during this year. In August, 1886, he was appointed assistant conductor to Levi and Fischer at the Munich Opera, where he remained until July, 1889, when he became conductor at Weimar. In 1892, he almost died from an attack of pneumonia, and on his recovery took a long trip through Greece, Egypt and Sicily. It was on this tour that he wrote and composed "Guntram," which was brought out at Weimar in May, 1894. After the first performance, he announced his engagement to the singer of *Freihild* in "Guntram," Pauline de Ahna, the daughter of a Bavarian general. The same year he returned to Munich as conductor, remaining there until 1899, when he became one of the conductors at the Berlin Opera, which position he still holds. He is one of the "star" conductors of Europe, receiving invitations to conduct concerts in many cities, including Brussels, Moscow, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Madrid, London and Paris; and his American tour was a memorable one. He is a man of untiring industry. It is said that he worked no less than half a year on "Thus Spake Zarathustra," and that the writing of his scores is a model of beauty.

Strauss occupies a commanding position in the world

of music. He has achieved it through a remarkable combination of musical technique and inspiration coupled with rare industry. His ideals are of the highest. His intellectual activity is great. He seems a man of calm and noble poise, of broad horizon. It would be presumption to speak of "expectations" as to one who has accomplished so much. For the great achievements already to his credit are the best promise for the future. Indeed, even as I am writing this, his new music-drama, "Salome," is proving itself the artistic sensation of the musical season abroad.

XIII

A NOTE ON CHAMBER MUSIC

LOVERS of chamber music form an extremely refined and cultured class, and, like all highly refined and cultured people, are very conservative. They are the purists among music-lovers, the last people who would care to see the classical forms abandoned, and who would be disturbed, not to say shocked, by any great departure from the sonata form. For the string quartet is to chamber music what the symphony is to orchestra and the sonata to the pianoforte—is, in fact, a sonata for two violins, viola and violoncello, just as the symphony is a sonata for orchestra.

Oddly enough, a pianoforte solo is more effective in a large hall than a string quartet, although the latter employs four times as many instruments; and the same is true of those pieces of chamber music in which the pianoforte is used, such as sonatas for pianoforte and violin or violoncello, pianoforte trios, quartets, quintets, and so on. A fine soloist on the pianoforte will be more at home in a large auditorium like Carnegie Hall or even the Metropolitan Opera House than would a string quartet or any other combination of chamber-music players. Paderewski plays in Carnegie Hall, and, I am sure, would be equally effective in the

Opera House. But an organization of chamber-music players would be lost in either place. The Kneisel Quartet plays in New York in Mendelssohn Hall, a small auditorium which is just about correctly proportioned for music of this kind.

Indeed, compared with the opera, the orchestra and even with the pianoforte, chamber music requires a setting like a jewel. For just as its devotees are the purists among music-lovers, so chamber music itself is something very "precious." It certainly is a most charming and intimate form of musical entertainment and the constituency of a well-established string quartet inevitably consists of the musical élite.

The same opinions that have been expressed regarding the sonatas and the symphonies of the great composers apply in a general way to their chamber music. Haydn's is naive; Mozart's more emotional in expression; Beethoven's, among that of classical composers, the most dramatic. In fact, Beethoven's last quartets, in which the instruments are employed quite independently and in which rôles practically of equal importance are assigned to each, are regarded by Richard Strauss as having given the cue to Wagner for his polyphonic treatment of the orchestra, and Wagner himself spoke of them as works through which "Music first raised herself to an equal height with the poetry and painting of the greatest periods of the past." Nevertheless, there are many who hold that in his last quartets Beethoven sought to accomplish more than can be expressed with four stringed instruments, and prefer his earlier works of this class, like the three "Rasumovski" quartets, Opus 59, dedicated by the com-

poser to Count Rasumovski, who maintained a private string quartet in which he played second violin, the others being professionals.

Schubert's most famous quartet is the one in D minor with the lovely slow movement, a theme with variations, the theme being his own song, "Death and the Maiden." One of the greatest works in the whole range of chamber music is his string quintet with two violoncellos. His pianoforte trios also are noble contributions to this branch of musical art. "One glance at this trio," writes Schumann of the Schubert trio in B flat major, "and all the wretchedness of existence is put to flight and the world seems young again. . . . Many and beautiful as are the things Time brings forth, it will be long ere it produces another Schubert."

Mendelssohn's chamber music is as polished, affable and gentlemanly as most of his other productions, and rapidly falling into the same state of unlamented desuetude. Schumann has given us his lovely pianoforte quintet in E flat. Brahms has contributed much that is noteworthy to chamber music, and, as a rule, it is less complex and more intelligently scored than his orchestral music. Dvorak in his E flat major quartet (Opus 51) introduces as the second movement a Dumka or Bohemian elegy, one of the most exquisite of his compositions. Fascinating in his national musical tints, he was genius enough for his music to be universal in its expression; and he who used the folk-songs of his native Bohemia so skillfully was no less artistic in the results he accomplished when, during his residence in New York, he wrote his string quartet

in F (Opus 96) on Negro themes. Tschaikowsky and neo-Russians like Arensky, and the Frenchmen, César Franck, Saint-Saëns, d'Indy and Debussy, are some of the modern names that figure on chamber-music programs.

HOW TO APPRECIATE VOCAL MUSIC

XIV

SONGS AND SONG COMPOSERS

SONGS either are strophic or *"durchcomponirt"* (composed through). In the strophic song the melody and accompaniment are repeated unchanged through each stanza or strophe of the poem; while, when a song is composed through, the music, although the principal melody may be repeated more than once, is subjected to changes in accordance with the moods of the poem.

Schubert is the first song composer who requires serious consideration. While not strictly the originator of the *Lied,* he is universally acknowledged to be the first great song composer and to have lifted song to its proper place of importance in music. Gluck set Klopfstock's odes to music; Haydn as a song writer is remembered by "Liebes Mädchen hör' mir Zu"; Mozart by "Das Veilchen"; and Beethoven by "Adelaide" and one or two other songs. Before Schubert's day this form of composition was regarded as something rather trivial and beneath the dignity of genius. But Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven at least did one thing through which they may possibly have contributed to the development of song-writing. By their freer writing for the pianoforte they prepared the way for the Schubert accompaniments.

Where Schubert got his musical genius from is a mystery. His father was a schoolmaster, whose first wife, Schubert's mother, was a cook. The couple had fourteen children and an income of $175. If this income is somewhat disproportionate to the size of the family, it yet is fortunate that they had fourteen children instead of only thirteen. Otherwise there would have been one great name less in musical history, for Schubert was the fourteenth.

He was born in Vienna in January, 1797. His thirty-one years—for this genius who so enriched music lived to be only thirty-one—were passed in poverty. His father was wretchedly poor, and his own works, when they could be disposed of at all to publishers, were sold at beggarly prices. Now they are universally recognized as masterpieces and are worth many times their weight in gold.

Too Poor to Buy Music Paper.

Shortly before he was twelve years old, Schubert, who had been singing soprano solos and playing violin in the parish choir, was sent to the so-called Convict, the Imperial school for training boys for the Court chapel. During his five years there his progress was so rapid that even before he was fourteen years old he was occasionally asked to substitute for the conductor of the school orchestra. Life, however, was hard. He had no money with which to buy even a few luxuries in the way of food to eke out the wretched fare of the Convict, nor music paper. Had it not been for the kindness of a fellow pupil and friend, named Spaun, he

would not have been able to write down and work out his ideas.

When his voice changed, the straitened family circumstances obliged him to become an assistant in his father's school. He was able to bear poverty with patience, but not the drudgery of teaching, and he is said often to have lost his temper with the boys. Altogether, he taught for three years, 1815 to 1818; and while his work was most distasteful to him, his genius was so spontaneous that during his three years he composed many songs, among them his immortal "Erlking." Finally a university student, Franz von Schober, who, having heard some of Schubert's songs, had become an enthusiastic admirer of the composer, offered him one of his rooms as a lodging, whereupon Schubert, straightway accepting the offer, gave up teaching and from that time to the end of his brief life led a Bohemian existence with a clique of friends of varied accomplishments. In this circle he was known as "Canevas," because whenever some new person joined it, his first question regarding the newcomer was "*Kann er wass?*" (Can he do anything?)

Outside a small circle of acquaintances, Schubert remained practically unknown until he made the acquaintance of Johann Michael Vogl, an opera singer, to whom his devoted friend, Von Schober, introduced him. Vogl was somewhat reserved in his opinion of the songs which he tried over with Schubert at their first meeting, but they made an impression. He followed up the acquaintance and became the first professional interpreter of Schubert's lyrics. "The manner in which Vogl sings and I accompany," wrote Schu-

bert to his brother Ferdinand, "so that we appear like *one* on such occasions, is something new and unheard of to our listeners." Publishers, however, held aloof. Five years after the "Erlking" was composed, several of them refused to print it, although Schubert offered to forego royalties on it. Finally, some of Schubert's friends had the song published at their own expense, and its success led to the issuing of eleven other songs, Schubert unwisely accepting eight hundred florins in lieu of royalty on these and the "Erlking." Yet from one of these songs alone, "The Wanderer," the publishers received twenty-seven thousand florins between the years 1822 and 1861.

How the "Erlking" was Composed.

Schubert being the greatest of song composers, and the "Erlking" his greatest song, the circumstances under which it was written are of especial interest. His friend Spaun, the same who provided him with music paper at the Convict, relates that one afternoon toward the close of the year 1815 he went with the poet Mayrhofer to visit Schubert. They found the composer all aglow, reading the "Erlking" aloud to himself. He walked up and down the room several times, book in hand, then suddenly sat down and as fast as his pen could travel put the music on paper. Having no piano, the three men hurried over to the Convict, where the "Erlking" was sung the same evening and received with enthusiasm. The old Court organist, Ruziczka, afterward played it over himself without the voice, and when some of those present objected to the disso-

nance which occurs three times in the course of the composition and depicts the child's terror of the *Erlking*, the old organist struck these chords and explained how perfectly they reflected the spirit of the poem and how felicitously they were worked out in their musical resolution.

Schubert's song is almost Wagnerian in its descriptive and dramatic quality. The coaxing voice of the *Erlking*, the terror of the child, the efforts of the father to allay his boy's fears, each has its characteristic expression, which yet is different from the narrative portions of the poem, while in the accompaniment the horse gallops along. Schubert was but eighteen years old when he set this ballad of Goethe's to music; yet there is no more thrilling climax to be found in all song literature than those dissonances which I have mentioned and which with each repeat rise to a higher interval and become each time more shrill with terror. Whoever has heard Lilli Lehmann sing this song should be able to appreciate its real greatness, as Goethe, who had remained utterly indifferent to Schubert's music, did when the "Erlking" was sung to him by Frau Schroeder-Devrient, to whom he exclaimed: "Thank you a thousand times for this great artistic achievement. When I heard this song before I did not like it at all, but sung in your way it becomes a true picture."

Finck on Schubert.

More than six hundred songs by Schubert have been published, and when we remember that he wrote symphonies, sonatas, shorter pianoforte pieces, chamber

music and operas, the fertility of his brief life is astounding. The rapidity with which he composed, however, was not due to carelessness, but to the spontaneity of his genius and the fact that he loved to compose. "He composed as a bird sings in the spring, or as a well gushes from a mountain-side, simply because he could not help it," says Mr. Finck, in his "Songs and Song Writers." We have it on the authority of Schubert's friend, Spaun, that when he went to bed he kept his spectacles on, so that when he woke up he could go right to the table and compose without wasting time looking for his glasses. In the two years 1815-16 he wrote no less than two hundred and fifty-four songs. Six of the songs in the "Winterreise" cycle were composed in one morning, and he had eight songs to his credit in a single day. The charming "Hark, Hark, the Lark" was written at a tavern where he chanced to see the poem in a book the leaves of which he was slowly turning over. "If I only had some music paper!" he exclaimed, whereupon one of his friends promptly ruled lines on the back of his *Speise Karte,* and Schubert, with the varied noises of the tavern going on about him, jotted down the song then and there.

Of course, it is impossible to touch on all the aspects of such a genius as his. In his songs clear and beautiful melody is, as a rule, combined with a descriptive accompaniment. Sometimes the description is given by means of only a few chords, like the preluding ones in "Am Meer." At other times the description runs through the entire accompaniment, like the waves that flash and dance around the melody of "Auf dem Wasser zu Singen"; the galloping horse in the "Erlking";

the veiled mist that seems to hang over the scenes in the wonderfully dramatic poem, "Die Stadt"; the flutter of the bird in "Hark, Hark, the Lark"; the brook that flows like a leitmotif through the "Maid of the Mill" cycle—these are a few of the examples that with Schubert could be cited by the dozen.

And the range of his work—here again space forbids the multiplication of examples. It extends from the naive "Haiden Röslein" to the tragic "Doppelgänger"; from the whispering foliage of the "Linden Tree" to the pathetic drone of the "Hurdy-Gurdy Man"; from the "Serenade" to "Todt und das Mädchen." Schubert is the greatest genius among song composers. Compare the growing reputation of him who of all musicians was perhaps the most neglected during his life, with that of Mendelssohn, the most fêted of composers, but now rapidly dropping to the position of a minor tone poet, and who, although he wrote eighty-three songs, is as a song writer remembered outside of Germany by barely more than one *Lied,* the familiar "On the Wings of Song."

Schumann's Individuality.

In Schumann's songs the piano part is more closely knit and interwoven with the vocal melody than with Schubert's, and, as a result, the voice does not stand out so clearly. While his songs are not what they have been called by a German critic, "pianoforte pieces with accidental vocal accompaniments," at times, in his vocal compositions, the pianoforte gains too great an ascendancy over the voice. If asked to draw a distinction between

Schubert and Schumann, I should say that there is a twofold interest in most of Schubert's songs. He reproduces the feeling of the poem in his vocal melody; then, if the poem contains a descriptive suggestion, he produces that phase of it in his accompaniment, without, however, allowing the pianoforte part to encroach on the vocal melody. The melody gives the feeling, the accompaniment the description or mood picture. Schumann, on the other hand, rarely is descriptive. Nearly always he produces a mood picture in tone, but requires both voice and pianoforte to effect his purpose. As this, however, is Schumann's method of composition, and as it is better that each composer should leave the seal of his individuality on everything he does, and not be an imitator, it is not cause for regret that while Schubert is Schubert, Schumann is Schumann.

The proportion of fine songs among the two hundred and forty-five composed by Schumann is, however, much smaller than in the heritage left us by Schubert; and while Schubert, from the time he wrote his first great vocal compositions, added many equally great ones every year, Schumann's songs, on the whole, show a decided falling off after he had wooed and won Clara Wieck. It was during his courtship that he produced his best songs. Separated from her by the command of her stern father, he made love to her in music.

"I am now writing nothing but songs, great and small," we find him saying in a letter to a friend in the summer of 1840. "Hardly can I tell you how delicious it is to write for voice instead of for instruments, and what a turmoil and tumult I feel within

me when I sit down to it." While he was composing his song cycle, "Die Myrthen," he wrote to Clara: "Since yesterday morning I have written twenty-seven pages of music, all new, concerning which the best I can tell you is that I laughed and wept for joy while composing them." A month later he writes her, in sending her his first printed songs: "When I composed them my soul was within yours; without such a love, indeed, no one could write such music—and this I intend as a special compliment." . . . "I could sing myself to death, like a nightingale," he writes to her again, on May 15th. Never was there such a musical wooing, and those who wish to participate in it can do so by singing or listening to such songs as "Dedication," "The Almond Tree," "The Lotos Flower," "In the Forest" (Waldesgespräch), "Spring Night," "He, the Noblest of the Noble," "Thou Ring upon My Finger," "'Twas in the Lovely Month of May," "Where'er My Tears Are Falling," "I'll Not Complain," and "Nightly in My Dreaming." Among his songs not inspired by love should be mentioned the "Two Grenadiers," which Plançon sings so inimitably.

Phases of Franz's Genius.

Robert Franz (1815-1892) had his life embittered by neglect and physical ills. His family name originally was Knauth, his father having been Christoph Knauth. But in order to distinguish him from his brother, who was engaged in the same business, he was addressed as Christoph Franz, a name which he subsequently had legalized. Yet critics insisted that

Robert Franz was a pseudonym which the composer had adopted from vanity in order to indicate that he was as great as *Robert* Schumann and *Franz* Schubert put together.

Franz was strongly influenced by Bach and Händel, many of whose scores he supplied with what are known as "additional accompaniments," filling out gaps which these composers left in their scores according to the custom of their day. His songs show this influence in their polyphony, and the German critic, Ambrose, said that Franz's song, "Der Schwere Abend," looked as if Bach had sat down and composed a Franz song out of thanks for all that Franz was to do for him through his additional accompaniments. Besides their polyphony derived from Bach, Franz's songs are interesting for their modulations, which are employed not simply for the sake of showing cleverness or originality, but for their appropriateness in expressing the mood of the poem. He also was extremely careful in regard to the choice of key and decidedly objected to transpositions of his songs, in order to make them singable for higher or lower voices than could use the original key. "When I am dead," he wrote to his publisher, "I cannot prevent these transpositions, but so long as I am alive I shall fight them."

Franz did not endeavor to reproduce visible things in his pianoforte parts, and the voice in his songs often is declamatory, merging into melody only in the more deeply emotional passages. He is a reflective rather than a dramatic composer, disliked opera, and himself said that any one who had penetrated deeply into his songs well knew that the dramatic element was not to

be found in them, nor was it intended to be. Composers, however, have many theories regarding their music which, in practice, come to naught; and whether Franz thought his songs dramatic or not, the fact remains that when Lilli Lehmann sang his "Im Herbst" it was as thrillingly dramatic as anything could be.

Self-Critical.

Franz was extremely self-critical. He kept his productions in his desk for years, working over them again and again, until in many cases the song in its final shape bore slight resemblance to what it had been at first. He declared his Opus 1 to be no worse than his latest work, because it had been composed with equal care and had had the benefit of his ripening judgment and experience. He admired Wagner and dedicated one of his song volumes to him; but when some critics fancied that they discovered Wagnerian traits in several songs in his last collection, Op. 51-52, he was able to prove that these very songs were among the first he had written, and were published so late in his career simply because he had kept them back for revision.

His physical disabilities were pitiable. When he was about thirty-three years old and shortly after his marriage, he was standing in the Halle railway station when a locomotive close by sounded its shrill whistle. The effect upon him was like the piercing of his ears. For several days afterward he heard nothing but confused buzzing, and from that time on his hearing became worse and worse, until finally his ears pained

him even when he composed. In 1876 he became totally deaf, and a few years later his right arm was paralyzed from shoulder to thumb. He was a poor man, and right at the worst time in his life, when he was totally deaf, a small pension which he had received from the Bach Society was taken away from him. But his admirers, many of them Americans, came to his rescue and raised a fund for his support.

Among his finest songs are "Widmung," "Leise Zieht durch mein Gemuht," "Bitte," "Die Lotos Blume," "Es Ragt der Alte Eborus," "Meerfahrt," "Das is ein Brausen und Heulen," "Ich Hab' in Deinem Auge," "Ich Will meine seele Taugen," and "Es Hat' Die Rose sich Beklagt."

Brahms a Thinker in Music.

Brahms was a profound thinker in music—not a philosopher, but a reflective poet, whose musicianship, however, was so great that he cared too little for the practical side of his art as compared with the theoretical. If what he wrote looked all right on paper he was indifferent as to whether it sounded right or not; consequently, if he started out with a certain rhythmical figuration or a certain scheme of harmonic progression, he carried it through rigidly to its logical conclusion, utterly oblivious to, or at least utterly regardless of, any tonal blemishes that might result, although by slightly altering his scheme here and there he might have obviated these. This is the reason why some people find passages in his music which to them sound repellant. But those who have not allowed this

aspect of Brahms's work to prejudice them and have familiarized themselves with his music, well know that he is one of the loftiest souls that ever put pen to staff. He never is drastic, never sensational, never superficial; and the climaxes of his songs, as in his other music, are produced not by great outbursts of sound, but by sudden modulations or change of rhythm, which give a wonderful "lift" to voice and accompaniment.

Among his best known songs (and each of these is a masterpiece) are: "Wie Bist du meine Königin," "Ruhe," "Süss Liebschen," "Von ewiger Liebe," "Wiegenlied," "Minnelied," "Feldeinsamkeit," "Wie Melodien zeiht es mir," "Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer," "Meine Lieder," "Wir wandelten, wir Swei, zusammen."

One of the most impassioned modern lyrical outbursts is Jensen's setting of Heine's "Lehn deine Wang' an Meine Wang'," and his "Frühlingsnacht" also is a very beautiful song, although the popularity of Schumann's setting of the same poem has cast it unduly into the shade. Rubinstein will be found considerably less prolix in his songs than in his music in other branches, and those which he wrote to the Persian poems of Von Bodenstedt ("Mirza Schaffy") are fascinating in their Oriental coloring. The "Asra," and "Yellow Rolls at my Feet," (Gold Rollt mir zu Füssen) are among the best known of these; while "Es blink't der Thau," "Du Bist wie eine Blume," and "Der Traum" are among Rubinstein's songs which are or should be in the repertoire of every singer. Tschaikowsky and

Dvorak are not noteworthy as song writers, but the former's setting of "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt" and the latter's "Gypsy Songs" are highly successful.

Grieg's Originality.

One of the most fascinating among modern song writers is the Norwegian, Grieg. He has been unusually fortunate in having a fine singer as a wife. Mr. Finck relates that Ibsen, after hearing her sing his poems as set to music by Grieg, whispered as he shook the hands of this musical couple, the one word, "Understood."

Grieg's originality has not been thoroughly appreciated, because much of the beauty of his music has been attributed to what is supposed to be its Norwegian origin. Grieg is national, it is true, but not in a cramped or narrow sense. His music is the product of his individual genius, and his genius has made him so popular that what is his has come to be wrongly considered Norwegian, whereas it is Norway interpreted through the genius of Grieg. His music is not a dialect, but music of universal significance, fortunately tinged with his individuality. "I Love You," Ibsen's "The Swan," "By the Riverside," "Springtide," "Wounded Heart," "The Mother Sings" (a mother mourning her dead child), "At the Bier of a Young Woman," and "From Monte Pincio," are among his finest *Lieder*.

Chopin is much too little known as a song writer. His genius as a composer for the pianoforte has overshadowed his songs, and the public is familiar with

little else save "The Maiden's Wish," which is one of Madame Sembrich's favorite encores and to which she plays her own accompaniment so delightfully. But there is plenty of national color in the "Lithuanina" song, plenty of pathos in "Poland's Dirge," and plenty of lyrical passion in "My Delights." Finck says that in all music, lyric or dramatic, the thrill of a kiss has never been expressed so ecstatically as in the twelve bars of this song marked "*crescendo sempre piu accellerando.*" Certainly *sempre* (always) and *accellerando* (faster) are capital words when applied to a kiss!

Richard Wagner, when twenty-six years old, in Paris, tried to relieve his poverty by composing a few songs, among which is a very charming setting of Ronsard's "Dors mon enfant." He also set Heine's "The Two Grenadiers" to music, utilizing the "Marsellaise" in the accompaniment; but, as a whole, the Wagner version of this poem is not as effective as Schumann's. In 1862 he composed music to five poems written by Mathilde Wesendonck, among which is the famous "Träume," which utilizes the theme of the love duet that later on appeared in "Tristan."

Liszt's Genius for Song.

Liszt's songs are a complete musical exposition of the poems to which they are composed. Thus while, by way of comparison, Rubinstein's setting of "Du Bist wie eine Blume" gives through its simplicity a rare impression of purity, Liszt in his setting of the same poem adds to that purity the sense of sacredness

with which the contemplation of a pure woman fills a man's heart and causes him to worship her. His "Lorelei" is a beautiful lyric scene. We view the flowing river, seem to hear the seductive voice of the temptress, and watch the treacherous and stormy current that hurries the ensnared boatman to his doom. And what song has more of that valuable quality we call "atmosphere" than Liszt's version of "Kennst du das Land?" As will be the case with Liszt in other branches of music, he will be recognized some day as one of the greatest of song composers.

Richard Strauss's songs, from having been regarded as so bristling with difficulties as to be impossible, have become favorites in the song repertoire. When it is a genius who creates difficulties these are sure to be overcome by ambitious players and singers, and music advances technically by just so much. Strauss's "Ständchen," with its deliciously delicate accompaniment, so difficult to play with the requisite grace, was the first of Strauss's songs to become popular here, and it was the art of our great singer, Madame Nordica, that made it so. Now we hear "Die Nacht," "Traum durch die Dämmerung," "Heimliche Aufforderung," "Allerseelem," "Breit über mein Haupt Dein schwarzes Haar," and many of his other songs with growing frequency. There are few song composers with whom the pianoforte accompaniment is so entirely distinct from the melody (or so difficult to play), as often is the case with Strauss. As with Schubert, every descriptive suggestion contained in the poem is carried into the accompaniment, but the vocal part is more declamatory and more varied. Even now it seems cer-

tain that Strauss's songs are permanent acquisitions to the repertoire. It still is too soon, however, to affirm the same thing of the unfortunate Hugo Wolf's songs, although I find myself strongly attracted by "Er ists," "Frühling übers Jahr," "Fussteise," "Der König bei der Kröning," "Gesang Weyla's," "Elfenlied" and "Der Tambour."

Saint-Saëns, Delibes, Godard, Massenet, Chaminade and the late Augusta Holmès are among French song writers whose work is clever, but who seem to me more concerned with manner than with matter. Gounod's rank as a song composer is much below his reputation as the composer of "Faust" and "Romeo et Juliette." Oddly enough, however, the idea that came to him of placing a melody above a prelude from Bach's "Well Tempered Clavichord" did more than anything he had accomplished up to that time to make him famous. Originally he scored it for violin with a small female chorus off stage. Then he replaced the chorus with a harmonium. Finally he seems to have been struck with the fact that the melody fitted the words of the "Ave Maria," substituted a single voice for the violin, which, however, still can supplement the vocal melody with an obbligato, did away with the harmonium, and the result was the Gounod-Bach "Ave Maria." The Bach prelude, of course, sinks to the level of a mere accompaniment, for it has to be taken much slower than Bach intended.

American composers who have produced noteworthy songs are Edward A. MacDowell, G. W. Chadwick, Arthur Foote, Clayton Johns, Homer N. Bartlett, Margaret Ruthven Lang, and the late Ethelbert Nevin.

XV

ORATORIO

ORATORIO had its origin in an attempt by a sixteenth century Italian monk to make divine service more interesting—to draw to church people who might not be attracted by the opportunity to hear a sermon, but could be persuaded to come if music a trifle more entertaining to the common mind than the unaccompanied (*à capella*) ecclesiastical compositions of Palestrina and other masters of the polyphonic school, were thrown in with them. Music still is regarded as a prime drawing card in churches, and when nowadays a fine basso rises after the sermon and sings "It is enough," we can paraphrase it as meaning, "It is enough so far as the sermon is concerned, and now to make up for it you are going to have a chance to listen to some music." When the announcement is made that such-and-such a well-known singer has been engaged for a church it means that the Reverend —— is doing just what the monk, Neri, did, about four hundred years ago—fishing for a congregation with music.

As it exists to-day, however, oratorio has little to do with religious worship, and usually is practiced amid secular surroundings, with a female chorus in variegated evening attire and a male chorus in claw-ham-

mers, the singers hanging more or less anxiously on the baton of the conductor. This living picture which, so far as this country is concerned, I have, I believe, drawn in correct perspective, is so much out of keeping with the religious subjects which usually underlie the texts of oratorios that it may account for the comparative lack of interest shown by Americans for this form of musical entertainment.

It also is true, however, that in this country oratorio never has had more than half a chance. This is due to the fact that the American man is not as sensitive to music nor musically as well educated as the American woman, the result being that the male contingent of the average American oratorio chorus is less competent than the women singers. Tenors are "rare birds" in any land, and rarer here apparently than elsewhere, so that in this division of our mixed choruses there is a lack of brilliancy in tone and of precision in attack. These several circumstances combine to prevent that well-balanced ensemble necessary to a satisfactory performance.

An Incongruous Art-Form.

Even at its best, however, oratorio is an incongruous art-form, neither an opera nor a church service, but rather an attempt to design something that shall not shock people who consider it "wicked" to go to the opera, nor afflict with *ennui* those who would consider an invitation to listen to sacred music during the week an imposition. It seems peculiarly adapted to the idea of entertainment which prevails in England, where ap-

parently any diversion in order to be considered legal must be more or less of a bore. Fortunately, however, there be many men of many minds; so that while, for example, one could not well draw a gloomier picture of the hereafter for a critic like Mr. Henry T. Finck than as a place where he would be obliged to hear, let me suggest, semi-weekly performances of "The Messiah," the annual Christmas auditions of that work have been the financial salvation of oratorio in America.

San Filippo Neri, who was born in Florence in 1515, and was the founder of the Congregation of the Fathers of the Oratory, was the originator of oratorio. In order to attract people to church, he instituted before and after the sermon dramatic and musical renderings of scenes from Scripture. It is not unlikely that the suggestion for the underlying dramatic text came from the old Mystery and Miracle plays, which, to say the least, were naive. In one of these, representing Noah and his family about to embark in the ark, *Mrs. Noah* declares that she prefers to stay behind with her worldly friends, and when at last her son *Shem* seizes and forces her into the ark, she retaliates by giving the worthy *Noah* a box on the ear. In another play of this kind which represented the Creation, a horse, pigs with rings in their noses, and a mastiff with a brass collar were brought up to *Adam* to name. But in one performance the mastiff spied a cow's rib-bone which had been provided for the formation of *Eve,* grabbed it and carried it off, in spite of the efforts of the *Angel* to whistle him back, and *Eve* had to be created without the aid of the rib.

Primitive Efforts.

It is not likely that any such contretemps accompanied the performances of San Filippo's primitive oratorios, and yet it is probable that they were not only sung, but also acted with some kind of scenic setting and costumes; for Emelio del Cavaliere, a Roman composer, whose oratorio, "La Rappresentazione dell' Anima e del Corpo" (The Soul and the Body), was performed in February, 1600, in the Church of Santa Maria della Vallicella, but who died before the production, left minute directions regarding the scenery and action. In this oratorio, as in some of the other early ones, there was a ballet, which, according to its composer's directions, was to enliven certain scenes "with capers" and to execute others "sedately and reverentially."

It was the composer, Giovanni Carissimi, who first introduced the narrator in oratorio, this function being to continue the action with explanatory recitatives between the numbers. In his oratorio, "Jephtha," there is a solo for Jephtha's daughter, "Plorate colles, dolate montes" (Weep, ye hills; mourn, ye mountains), which has an echo for two sopranos at the end of each phrase of the melody. Alessandro Scarlatti, who developed the aria in opera, also gave more definite form to the solos in oratorio and a more dramatic accompaniment to the recitatives which related to action, leaving the narrative recitals unaccompanied.

Up to this point, in fact, oratorio and opera may be said to have developed hand in hand, but now, through the influence of German composers and espe-

cially through their Passion Music, it assumed a more distinct form. "Die Auferstehung Christi" (The Resurrection), by Heinrich Schütz, produced in Dresden in 1623, and his "Sieben Worte Christi" (The Seven Words of Christ), subjects which have been reverentially set by many German composers, are regarded as pioneer works of their kind. In the development of Passion Music much use was made of church chorales, the grand sacred melodies of the German people, which have had incalculable influence in forming the stability of character that is a distinguishing mark of the race. They are conspicuous in the "Tod Jesu," a famous work by Karl Heinrich Graun, a contemporary of Bach, whose own "Passion According to St. Matthew" is regarded by advanced lovers of music as the greatest of all works in oratorio or quasi-oratorio style, although the English still cling to Händel.

"However close the imitation or complicated the involutions of the several voices," says Rockstro, in writing of Händel, "we never meet with an inharmonious collision. He (Händel) seems always to have aimed at making his parts run on velvet; whereas Bach, writing on a totally different principle, evidently delighted in bringing harmony out of discord and made a point of introducing hard passing notes in order to avail himself of the pleasant effect of their ultimate resolution." The "inharmonious collisions," the "hard passing notes" are among the very things which make Bach so modern; since modern ears do not set much store by music that "runs on velvet."

Bach's "Passion Music."

It is interesting to note that this "Passion According to St. Matthew" is in two parts, and that, as was the case with the oratorios of San Filippo Neri, the sermon came between. The text was prepared by Christian Friedrichs Henrici, writing under the pseudonym of Picander, and is partly dramatic, partly epic in form, with an Evangelist to relate the various events in the story, but with the Lord, St. Peter and others using their own words according to the sacred text. A double chorus is employed, sometimes representing the Disciples, sometimes the infuriated populace; but always treated in dramatic fashion.

At the time the "Passion" was written, the arias and certain of the choruses which contained meditations on the events narrated were called "Soliloquiæ"; and in singing the beautiful chorales, the congregation was expected to join. The recitatives assigned to the Saviour are accompanied by string orchestra only, and are, as Rockstro says, full of gentle dignity, while the choruses are marked by an amount of dramatic power which is remarkable when one considers that Bach never paid any attention to the most dramatic of all musical forms, the opera. The "Passion According to St. Matthew," by Johann Sebastian Bach, was his greatest work and one of the greatest works of all times. It was produced for the first time at the afternoon service in the Church of St. Thomas, Leipzig, where Bach was Cantor, on Good Friday, 1729, and it was one hundred years before it was heard again, when it was revived by Men-

delssohn, in Berlin, on March 12th, 1829—an epoch-making performance.

Strictly speaking, Passion Music is not an oratorio, but a church service, and Bach actually designed his to serve as a counter-attraction to the Mass as performed in the Roman Church. What we understand under oratorio derived its vitality from George Frederick Händel, who was born at Halle in Lower Saxony, 1685, but whose most important work was accomplished in London, where he died in 1759 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Before Händel wrote his two greatest oratorios, "Israel in Egypt" and "The Messiah," he had, through the composition of numerous operas, mastered the principles of dramatic writing, and in his oratorios he aims, whenever the text makes it permissible, at dramatic expression. It is only necessary to recall the "Plague Choruses" in "Israel in Egypt," especially the "Hail-Stone Chorus" and the chorus of rejoicing ("The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea"); or by way of contrast, the tenderly expressive melody of "As for His people, He led them forth like sheep," to realize what an adept Händel was in dramatic expression.

Rockstro on Händel.

Händel may in fact be called the founder of variety and freedom in writing for chorus. While I must confess that I do not share Rockstro's intense enthusiasm for Händel and for "The Messiah," nevertheless he expresses so well the general feeling in England and the feeling on the part of those in this country who crowd

the annual Christmas performances of "The Messiah," toward that work, that the best means of conveying an idea of what oratorio signifies to those who like it, is to quote him. Referring to Händel's free and varied treatment of chorus writing, he says:

"He bids us 'Behold the Lamb of God' and we feel that he has helped us to do so. He tells us that 'With His stripes we are healed,' and we are sensible not of the healing only, but of the cruel price at which it was purchased. And we yield him equal obedience when he calls upon us to join in his hymns of praise. Who hearing the noble subject of 'I will sing unto the Lord,' led off by the tenors and altos, does not long to reinforce their voices with his own? Who does not feel a choking in his throat before the first bar of the 'Hallelujah Chorus' is completed, though he may be listening to it for the hundredth time? Hard indeed must his heart be who can refuse to hear when Händel preaches through the voice of his chorus." The "Messiah" also contains two of Händel's most famous solos, "He shall feed His flock" and "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

This work was performed for the first time on April 13, 1742, at the Music Hall, Dublin, when Händel was on a visit to the Duke of Devonshire, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The rehearsals, at which many people were present by invitation, had aroused so much enthusiasm, that those who were interested in the charitable object for which it was given, requested "as a favor that the ladies who honor this performance with their presence would be pleased to come without hoops, as it would greatly increase the charity by making room

for more company." Gentlemen also were requested to come without swords, for the same reason. It is said that at the first London performance, when the "Hallelujah Chorus" rang out, the King rose in his place and, followed by the entire audience, stood during the singing of the chorus, and that thus the custom, which still is observed, originated.

Following Händel, Haydn in 1798, when nearly seventy years old, wrote "The Creation," founded on passages from Milton's "Paradise Lost," and after it "The Seasons," for which Thomson's familiar poem supplied the text. In both of these there is much purely descriptive music, especially in the earlier oratorio, when the creation of various animals is related. In "The Creation," too, after the passages for muted strings, is the famous outburst of orchestra and chorus, "And there was light." Haydn was a far greater master of orchestration than Händel. He also was one of the early composers of the homophonic school, and there is a freer, more spontaneous flow of melody in his oratorios. But they undoubtedly lack the grandeur of Händel's.

Mendelssohn's Oratorios.

Between Haydn and Mendelssohn, in the development of oratorio, nothing need be mentioned, excepting Beethoven's "Mount of Olives" and Spohr's "The Last Judgment" (Die Letzten Dinge). Mendelssohn, in his "St. Paul," followed the example of the old passionists, and introduced chorales, but in his greater oratorio, "Elijah," which is purely an Hebraic subject, he discarded these. The dramatic quality of "Elijah"

is so apparent that it has been said more than once to be capable of stage representation with scenery, costumes and action. This is especially true of the prophet himself, whose personality is so definitely developed that he stands before us almost like a character behind the footlights. This dramatic value is felt at the very beginning, when, after four solemn chords on the brass, the work, instead of opening with an overture, is ushered in by *Elijah's* prophecy of the drought. Then comes the overture, which is descriptive of the effects of the prophecy.

Next to "The Messiah," "Elijah" probably is the most popular of oratorios, and I think this is due to its dramatic value, and to the fact that its descriptive music, instead of being somewhat naive, not to say childish, as is the case with some passages in Haydn's "Creation," is extremely effective. It is necessary only to remind the reader of the descent of the fire and the destruction of the prophets of Baal; of the description of the gradual approach of the rain-storm, as *Elijah,* standing on Mount Carmel and watching for the coming of the rain, is informed of the little cloud, "out of the sea, like a man's hand"—a little cloud which we seem to see in the music, and which grows in size and blackness until it bursts like a deluge over the scene. Then there are the famous bass solo, "It is enough"; the unaccompanied "Trio of Angels"; the *Angel's* song, "Oh, rest in the Lord"; and the tenderly expressive chorus, "He, watching over Israel." I once heard a performance of "Elijah" during which the *Angel* carried on such a lively flirtation with the *Prophet* that she almost missed the cue for her most

important solo; in fact would have missed it, had not the conductor sharply called her attention to the fact that it was time for her to begin.

I think that oratorio reached its successive climaxes with "The Messiah" and "Elijah." Gounod's "Redemption" and "Mors et Vita," in spite of passages of undeniable beauty, seem to me, as a whole, rather spineless. Edward Elgar's "Dream of Gerontius" and "The Apostles" have created much excitement in England and considerable interest here, but while it is too soon to hazard a definite opinion of this composer, he appears to be lacking in individuality—to derive from Wagner whatever is interesting in his scores, while what is original with him is unimportant.

There are certain sacred, semi-sacred and even secular works that are apt to figure on the programs of oratorio and allied societies. Mr. Frank Damrosch's Society of Musical Art sings very beautifully some of the unaccompanied choruses of the early Italian polyphonic school, such as Palestrina's "Papae Marcelli Mass," "Stabat Mater" and "Requiem"; the "Miserere" of Allegri (sought to be retained exclusively by the choir of the Sistine Chapel, but which Mozart wrote out from memory after hearing it twice); and the "Stabat Mater" of Pergolesi. There are also the Bach cantatas, Mozart's "Requiem," with its tragic associations; Beethoven's "Mass in D;" Schumann's "Paradise and the Peri" and his music to Byron's "Manfred" (with recitation); Liszt's "Graner Mass," "Legend of St. Elizabeth" and "Christus"; Rubinstein's "Tower of Babel" and "Paradise Lost"; Brahms's "German Requiem," a noble but difficult work; Dvorak's "Stabat

Mater"; Rossini's "Moses in Egypt" and "Stabat Mater"; Berlioz's "Requiem" and "Damnation de Faust," the American production of which latter was one of the late Dr. Leopold Damrosch's finest achievements; and Verdi's "Manzoni Requiem."

XVI

OPERA AND MUSIC-DRAMA

OPERA originated in Florence toward the close of the sixteenth century. A band of enthusiastic, intellectual composers aimed at reproducing the musical declamation which they believed to have been characteristic of the representation of Greek tragedy. The first attempt resulted in a cantata, "Il Conte Ugolino," for single voice with the accompaniment of a single instrument, and composed by Vincenzo Galileo, father of the famous astronomer. Another composer, Giulio Caccini, wrote several shorter pieces in similar style.

These composers aimed at an exact oratorical rendering of the words. Consequently, their scores were neither fugal nor in any other sense polyphonic, but strictly monodic. They were not, however, melodious, but declamatory; and if Richard Wagner had wished, in the nineteenth century, to claim any historical foundation for the declamatory recitative which he introduced in his music-dramas, he might have fallen back upon these composers of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and through them back to Greek tragedy with its bands of lyres and flutes.

These Italian composers, then, were the creators of recitative, so different from the polyphonic church

music of the school of Palestrina. What usually is classed as the first opera, Jacopo Peri's "Dafne," was privately performed at the Palazzo Corsi, Florence, in 1597. So great was its success that Peri was commissioned, in 1600, to write a similar work for the festivities incidental to the marriage of Henry IV of France with Maria de Medici, and produced "Euridice," the first Italian opera ever performed in public.

The new art-form received great stimulus from Claudio Monteverde, the Duke of Mantua's *maestro di capella,* who composed "Arianna" in honor of the marriage of Francesco Gonzaga with Margherita, Infanta of Savoy. The scene in which *Ariadne* bewails her desertion by her lover was so dramatically written (from the standpoint of the day, of course) that it produced a sensation, and when Monteverde brought out with even greater success his opera "Orfeo," which showed a great advance in dramatic expression, as well as in the treatment of the instrumental score, the permanency of opera was assured.

Monteverde's scores contained, besides recitative, suggestions of melody, but these suggestions occurred only in the instrumental ritornelles. The Venetian composer Cavalli, however, introduced melody into the vocal score in order to relieve the monotonous effect of continuous recitative, and in his airs for voice he foreshadowed the aria form which was destined to be freely developed by Alessandro Scarlatti, who is regarded as the founder of modern Italian opera in the form in which it flourished from his day to and including the earlier period of Verdi's activity.

Melody, free and beautiful melody, soaring above a

comparatively simple accompaniment, was the characteristic of Italian opera from Scarlatti's first opera, "L'Onesta nell' Amore," produced in Rome in 1680, to Verdi's "Trovatore," produced in the same city in 1853. The names, besides Verdi's, associated with its most brilliant successes, are: Rossini ("Il Barbiere di Siviglia," "Guillaume Tell"), Bellini ("Norma," "La Sonnambula," "I Puritani"), and Donizetti ("Lucia," "L'Elisir d'Amore," "La Fille du Regiment"). These composers possessed dramatic verve to a great degree, aimed straight for the mark, and when at their best always hit the operatic target in the bull's-eye.

Reforms by Gluck.

The charge most frequently laid against Italian opera is that its composers have been too subservient to the singers, and have sacrificed dramatic truth and depth of expression, as well as the musicianship which is required of a well-written and well-balanced score, as between the vocal and instrumental portions, to the vanity of those upon the stage—in brief, that Italian opera consists too much of show-pieces for its interpreters. Among the first to protest practically against this abuse was Gluck, a German, who, from copying the Italian style of operatic composition early in his career, changed his entire method as late as 1762, when he was nearly fifty years old. "Orfeo et Euridice," the oldest opera that to-day still holds a place in the operatic repertoire, and containing the favorite air, "Che faro senza Euridice" (I have lost my Eurydice), was produced by Gluck, in Vienna, in the year mentioned.

There Gluck followed it up with "Alceste," then went to Paris, and scored a triumph with "Iphigenie en Aulite." But on the arrival, in Paris, of the Italian composer, Piccini, the Italian party there seized upon him as a champion to pit against Gluck, and there then ensued in the French capital a rivalry so fierce that it became a veritable musical War of the Roses until Gluck completely triumphed over Piccini with "Iphigenie en Tauride."

Gluck's reform of opera lay in his abandoning all effort at claptrap effect—effect merely for its own sake—and in making his choruses as well as his soloists participants, musically and actively, in the unfolding of the dramatic story. But while he avoided senseless vocal embellishments and ceased to make a display of singers' talents the end and purpose of opera, he never hesitated to introduce beautiful melody for the voice when the action justified it. In fact, what he aimed at was dramatic truth in his music, and with this end in view he also gave greater importance to the instrumental portion of his score.

Comparative Popularity of Certain Operas.

These characteristics remained for many years to come the distinguishing marks of German opera. They will be discovered in Mozart's "Nozze di Figaro," "Don Giovanni" and "Zauberflöte," which differ from Gluck's operas in not being based on heroic or classical subjects, and in exhibiting the general advance made in freer musical expression, as well as Mozart's greater spontaneity of melodic invention, his keen sense of the

dramatic element and his superior skill in orchestration. They also will be discovered in Beethoven's "Fidelio," which again differs from Mozart's operas in the same degree in which the individuality of one great composer differs from that of another. With Weber's "Freischütz," "Euryanthe" and "Oberon," German opera enters upon the romantic period, from which it is but a step to the "Flying Dutchman," "Tannhäuser," "Lohengrin" and the music-dramas of Richard Wagner.

Meanwhile, the French had developed a style of opera of their own, which is represented by Meyerbeer's "Les Huguenots," Gounod's "Faust," apparently destined to live as long as any opera that now graces the stage, and by Bizet's absolutely unique "Carmen." In French opera the instrumental support of the voices is far richer and more delicately discriminating than in Italian opera, and the whole form is more serious. It is better thought out, shows greater intellectual effort and not such a complete abandon to absolute musical inspiration. It is true, there is much claptrap in Meyerbeer, but "Les Huguenots" still lives—and vitality is, after all, the final test of an art-work.

Unquestionably, Italian operas like "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," "La Sonnambula," "Lucia," and "Trovatore" are more popular in this country than Mozart's or Weber's operatic works. In assigning reasons for this it seems generally to be forgotten that these Italian operas are far more modern. "Don Giovanni" was produced in 1787, whereas "Il Barbiere" was brought out in 1816, "La Sonnambula" in 1831, "Lucia" in 1835, "Trovatore" in 1853 and Verdi's last work in

operatic style, "Aida," in 1871. "Don Giovanni" still employs the dry recitative (recitatives accompanied by simple chords on the violoncello), which is exceedingly tedious and makes the work drag at many points. In "Il Barbiere," although the recitatives are musically as uninteresting, they are humorous, and, with Italian buffos, trip lightly and vivaciously from the tongue. As regards "Fidelio" and "Der Freischütz," the amount of spoken dialogue in them is enough to keep these works off the American stage, or at least to prevent them from becoming popular here.

Wagner has had far-reaching effect upon music in general, and even Italian opera, which, of all art-forms, was least like his music-dramas, has felt his influence. Boito's "Mefistofele," Ponchielli's "La Gioconda," Verdi's "Otello" and "Falstaff," are examples of the far-reaching results of Wagner's theories. Even in "Aida," Verdi's more discriminating treatment of the orchestral score and his successful effort to give genuine Oriental color to at least some portions of it, show that even then he was beginning to weary of the cheaper successes he had won with operas like "Il Trovatore," "La Traviata" and "Rigoletto," and, while by no means inclined to menace his own originality by copying Wagner or by adopting his system, was willing to profit by the more serious attitude of Wagner toward his art. Puccini, in "La Tosca," has written a first-act finale which is palpably constructed on Wagnerian lines. In his "La Bohême," in Leoncavallo's "I Pagliacci" and in Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana," the distinct efforts made to have the score reflect the characteristics of the text show Wagner's influence potent

in the most modern phases of Italian opera. Humperdinck's "Hänsel und Gretel" and Richard Strauss's "Feuersnot" and "Salome" represent the further working out of Wagner's art-form in Germany.

Wagner's Music-Dramas.

I doubt whether Wagner had either the Greek drama or the declamatory recitative of the early Italian opera composers in mind when he originated the music-drama. My opinion is that he thought it out free from any extraneous suggestion, but afterward, anticipating the attacks which in the then state of music in Germany would be made upon his theories, sought for prototypes and found them in ancient Greece and renascent Italy.

His theory of dramatic music is that it should express with undeviating fidelity the words which underly it; not words in their mere outward aspect, but their deeper significance in their relation to the persons, controlling ideas, impulses and passions out of which grow the scenes, situations, climaxes and crises of the written play, the libretto, if so you choose to call it—so long as you don't say "book of the opera." For even from this brief characterization, it must be patent that a music-drama is not an opera, but what opera should be or would be had it not, through the Italian love of clearly defined melody and the Italian admiration for beautiful singing, become a string of solos, duets and other "numbers" written in set form to the detriment of the action.

Opera is the glorification of the voice and the deifica-

tion of the singer.—Do we not call the prima donna a *diva?* Music-drama, on the other hand, is the glorification of music in its broadest sense, instrumental and vocal combined, and the deification of dramatic truth on the musical stage. Opera, as handled by the Italian and the French, undoubtedly is a very attractive art-form, but music-drama is a higher art-form, because more serious and more searching and more elevated in its expression of emotion.

Wagner was German to the core—as national as Luther, says Mr. Krehbiel most aptly, in his "Studies in the Wagnerian Drama," which, like everything this critic writes, is the work of a thinker. For the dramas which Wagner created as the bases for his scores, he went back to legends which, if not always Teutonic in their origin, had become steeped in Germanism. The profound impression made by Wagner's art works may be indicated by saying that the whole folk-lore movement dates from his activity, and that so far as Germany itself is concerned, his argument for a national art work as well as his practical illustration of what he meant through his own music-dramas, gave immense impetus to the development of united Germany as manifested in the German empire. He as well as the men of blood and iron had a share in Sedan.

Wagner's first successful work, "Rienzi," was an out-and-out opera in Meyerbeerian style. The "Flying Dutchman" already is legendary and more serious, while "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin" show immense technical progress, besides giving a clue to his system of leading motives, which is fully developed in the scores of the "Ring of the Nibelung," "Tristan und

Isolde," "Die Meistersinger," and "Parsifal." That his theories met with a storm of opposition and that for many years the battle between Wagnerism and anti-Wagnerism raged with unabated vigor in the musical world, are matters of history. Whoever wishes to explore this phase of Wagner's career will find it set forth in the most interesting Wagner biography in any language, Mr. Finck's "Wagner and His Works."

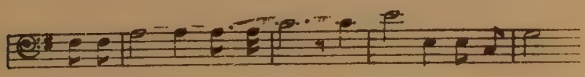
Wagner a Melodist.

It sometimes is contended that Wagner adopted his system of leading motives because he was not a melodist. This is refuted by the melodies that abound in his earlier works; and, even as I write, I can hear the pupils in a nearby public school singing the melody of the "Pilgrim's Chorus" from "Tannhäuser." Moreover, his leading motives themselves are descriptively or soulfully melodious as the requirement may be. They are brief phrases, it is true, but none the less they are melodies. And, in certain episodes in his music-dramas, when he deemed it permissible, he introduced beautiful melodies that are complete in themselves: *Siegmund's* "Love Song" and *Wotan's* "Farewell," in "Die Walküre," the Love Duet at the end of "Siegfried," the love scene in "Tristan und Isolde," the Prize Song in "Die Meistersinger." The eloquence of the brief melodious phrases which we call leading motives, considered by themselves alone and without any reference to the dramatic situation, must be clear to any one who has heard the Funeral March in "Götterdämmerung," which consists entirely of a series of leading motives

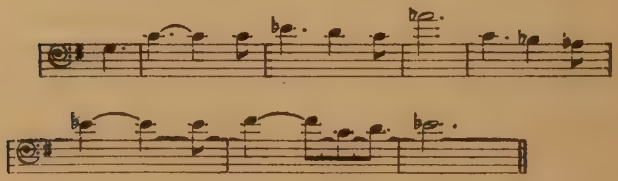
that have occurred earlier in the Cycle, yet give this passage an overpowering pathos without equal in absolute music and just as effective whether you know the story of the music-drama and the significance of the motives, or not. If you do know the story and the significance of these musical phrases, you will find that in this Funeral March the whole "Ring of the Nibelung" is being summed up for you, and coming as it does near the end of "Götterdämmerung," but one scene intervening between it and the final curtain, it gives a wonderful sense of unity to the whole work.

Unity is, in fact, a distinguishing trait of music-drama; and the very term "unity" suggests that certain recurring salient points in the drama, whether they be personages, ideas or situations, should be treated musically with a certain similarity, and have certain recognizable characteristics. In fact, the adaptation of music to a drama would seem to suggest association of ideas through musical unity, and to presuppose the employment of something like leading motives. They had indeed been used tentatively by Berlioz in orchestral music, and by Weber in opera ("Euryanthe"), but it remained for Wagner to work up the suggestion into a complete and consistent system.

To illustrate his method, take the Curse Motive, in the "Ring of the Nibelung," which is heard when *Alberich* curses the Ring, and all into whose possession it shall come. When, near the end of "Rheingold,"



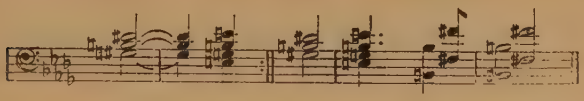
Fafner kills his brother, *Fasolt,* in wresting the Ring from him, the motive recurs with a significance which is readily understood. *Fasolt* is the first victim of the curse. Again, in "Götterdämmerung," when *Siegfried* lands at the entrance to the castle of *Gibichungs,* and is greeted by *Hagen,* although the greeting seems hearty enough, the motive is heard and conveys its sinister lure.

When, in "Die Walküre," *Brünnhilde* predicts the birth of a son to *Sieglinde,* you hear the Siegfried Motive, signifying that the child will be none other than

the young hero of the next drama. The motive is heard again when *Wotan* promises *Brünnhilde* to surround her with a circle of flames which none but a hero can penetrate, *Siegfried* being that hero; and also when *Siegfried* himself, in the music-drama "Siegfried," tells of seeing his image in the brook.

There are motives which are almost wholly rhythmi-

cal, like the "Nibelung" Smithy Motive, which depicts the slavery of the *Nibelungs,* eternally working in the

mines of Nibelheim; and motives with strange, weird harmonies, like the motive of the Tarnhelm, which con-



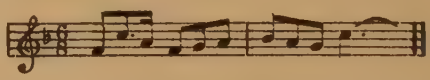
veys a sense of mystery, the Tarnhelm giving its wearer the power to change his form.

Leading Motives not Mere Labels.

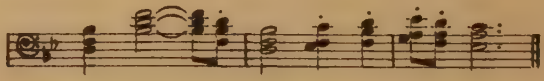
Leading motives are not mere labels. They concern themselves with more than the superficial aspect of things and persons. With persons they express character; with things they symbolize what these stand for. The Curse Motive is weird, sinister. You feel when listening to it that it bodes evil to all who come within its dark circle. The Siegfried Motive, on the other hand, is buoyant with youth, vigor, courage; vibrates with the love of achievement; and stirs the soul with its suggestion of heroism. But when you hear it in the Funeral March in "Götterdämmerung" and it recalls by association the gay-hearted, tender yet courageous boy, who slew the dragon, awakened *Brünnhilde* with his kiss, only to be betrayed and murdered by *Hagen,* and now is being borne over the mountain to the funeral pyre, those heroic strains have a tragic significance that almost brings tears to your eyes.

The Siegfried Motive is a good example of a musical phrase the contour of which practically remains unchanged through the music-drama. The varied emotions with which we listen to it are effected by associa-

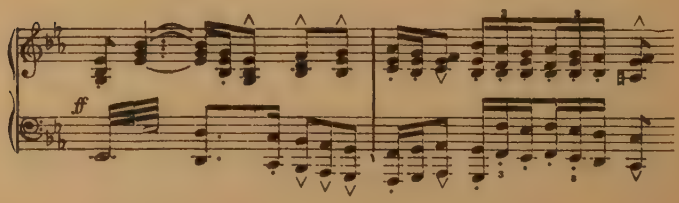
tion. But many of Wagner's leading motives are extremely plastic and undergo many changes in illustrating the development of character or the special bearing of certain dramatic situations upon those concerned in the action of the drama. As a gay-hearted youth, *Siegfried* winds his horn:



This horn call becomes, when, as *Brünnhilde's* husband, he bids farewell to his bride and departs in quest of knightly adventure, the stately Motive of *Siegfried,* the Hero:

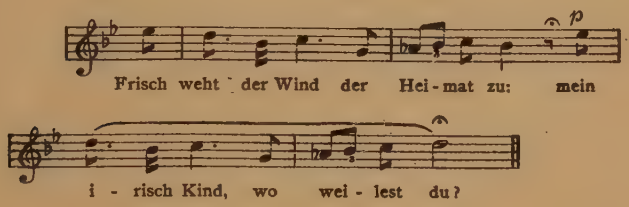


And when the dead *Siegfried,* stretched upon a rude bier, is borne from the scene, it voices the climax of the tragedy with overwhelming power:

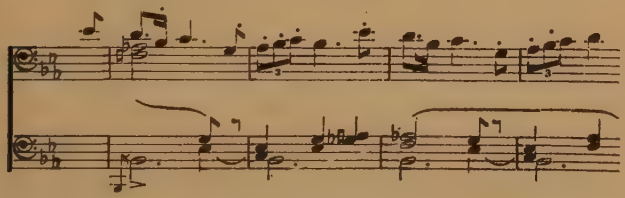


Thus we have two derivatives from the "Siegfried" horn call, each with its own special significance, yet harking back to the original germ.

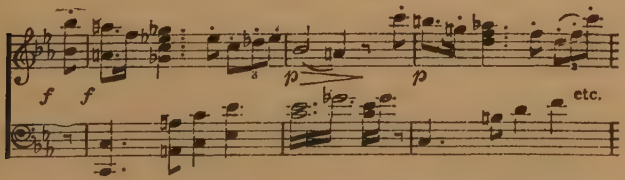
Soon after the opening of "Tristan und Isolde" a sailor sings an unaccompanied song of farewell to his *Irish Maid.* The words, "The wind blows freshly toward our home," are sung to an undulating phrase which seems to represent the gentle heaving of the sea.



This same phrase gracefully undulates through *Brangäne's* reply to *Isolde's* question as to the vessel's



course, changes entirely in character, and surges savagely around her wild outburst of anger when she is



told that the vessel is nearing Cornwall's shore, and breaks itself in savage fury against her despairing

wrath when she invokes the elements to destroy the ship and all upon it. Examples like these occur many times in the scores of Wagner's music-dramas.

Often, when several characters are participating in a scene, or when the act or influence of one, or the principle for which he stands in the drama, is potent, though he himself is not present, Wagner with rare skill combines several motives, utilizing for this purpose all the resources of counterpoint. Elsewhere I already have described how he has done this in the Magic Fire Scene in "Die Walküre," and one could add page after page of examples of this kind. I have also spoken of his supreme mastership of instrumentation, through which he gives an endless variety of tone color to his score.

Wagner was a great dramatist, but he was a far greater musician. There are many splendid scenes and climaxes in the dramas which he wrote for his music, and if he had not been a composer it is possible he would have achieved immortality as a writer of tragedy. On the other hand, however, there are in his dramas many long stretches in which the action is unconsciously delayed by talk. He believed that music and drama should go hand in hand and each be of equal interest; but his supreme musicianship has disproved his own theories, for his dramas derive the breath of life from his music. Theoretically, he is not supposed to have written absolute music—music for its own sake—but music that would be intelligible and interesting only in connection with the drama to which it was set. But the scores of the great scenes in his music-dramas, played simply as instrumental selections in concert and

without the slightest clue to their meaning in their given place, constitute the greatest achievements in absolute music that history up to the present time can show.

THE END

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